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CHINGIS-KHAN

(GHENGIS-KHAN)

By Professor

B. Ya. Vladimirtsov

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The Life of CHINGIS-KHAN

BY
PROFESSOR B. YA. VLADIMIRTSOV

Translated from the Russian by
PRINCE D. S. MIRSKY

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INTRODUCTION

In the thirteenth century the Mongols of the steppes and highlands that lie to the north of China founded an Empire, which in an extraordinarily short space of time conquered many civilized nations, spread over the greater part of Asia, overflowed into Europe, brought under a single sceptre the civilizations of the Far and of the Near East, and became the greatest Empire the world had witnessed. Though founded by a people of nomads and composed of the most heterogeneous elements, it succeeded for a long time in preserving its unity, and even when subdivided between the various branches of its founder's family, survived in the ideal unity of the several part-kingdoms. The whole history of the Old World was thus profoundly influenced by the Mongols.

The civilized nations of Asia that came in contact with them or were conquered by them could not fail to become interested in the destinies of this "unknown and strange" race and of its terrible leader—Chingis-Khan. Works relating the story of their rise from obscurity, of their campaigns and conquests were written in China, in Turkestan and in Western Asia, in Armenia and in Georgia. These works are the source of our information on the person of Chingis-Khan and of the Mongols of the

twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Not all of them may be admitted as reliable historical documents. They may be approached in the same way as we approach the writings of European authors, submitting them to searching and careful criticism so as to establish why and under what circumstances they were written. This work of criticism has brought European orientalists to the conclusion that the most important sources for the life and times of Chingis-Khan are the following :

(1) *The Compendium of Histories* (Jami'u't-Tawàrikh) of the Persian writer Rashidu'd-Din, an extensive work compiled in the early fourteenth century and based on the traditional lore—official or otherwise—of the Mongols ;

(2) *The Secret History of the Mongol People*, committed to writing in Mongolia in the thirteenth century and published in China in the fourteenth ;

(3) *The Official History of the Mongol* (*Yuan*) *Dynasty of China*, compiled in Chinese in the fourteenth century ;

(4) Several works by Moslem contemporaries to the Mongol invasion : (*a*) the Arabic *Chronicle* of Ibnu'l-Athir, compiled in Mesopotamia ; (*b*) the *Tables of Nasir* (in Persian) by Juzjani, who lived in Afghanistan and wrote his history in Persian in India in 1260 ;

(c) *the history of the World Conqueror* (in Persian) by Juwayni, written in 1260; Juwayni though younger than Juzjani, wrote before the disintegration of the Mongol Empire, and could thus visit Turkestan and Mongolia and utilize Mongolian sources, oral as well as written.

(5) Accounts of Chinese travellers; of General Mong-Hung and of the Taoist monk Ch'ang-Ch'un.

As has been seen the Mongols themselves possessed a historical literature consisting of traditions and legends that had been committed to writing. This would have constituted our most important source of information, but the greater part of these sources have been lost, and we are only made aware of their existence from the mentions and quotations in Chinese and Moslem histories. The only exception is the *Secret History of the Mongols*, which goes back to traditional epic poetry and is the heroic saga of Chingis-Khan and of his companions.

Though the European travellers who visited Mongolia in the thirteenth century—Friar John de Plano Carpini, Roebroek, and Marco Polo—give no additional information of importance on Chingis-Khan or on his times, we owe them good accounts of the countries, manners and customs of the peoples they saw, and these accounts are of the

highest importance for reconstructing the age of the Mongol conquests in the right historical perspective.

Making use of these and other sources, European and Oriental authors have compiled numerous works on the history of the Mongols and of Chingis-Khan. The *Histoire des Mongols* by D'Ohsson (in French, The Hague, 1834-35) and the works of V. V. Bartold, of the Soviet Academy of Science in Leningrad, especially *Turkestan at the Time of the Mongol Invasion* (in Russian, 1900; English translation, 1928, in the Gibb Memorial Series), are particularly important.

However valuable the sources we possess, it has to be recognized that all said and done, we have but scant data for the reconstruction of the life of the great conqueror, of his personality, or of the feelings and ideas that inspired him. Some of the most important have not come down to us (such is the case with the *Institutions of Chingis-Khan*, his famous *Yasa*, or *Jasak*), while other sources of the greatest importance remain unpublished, untranslated and unstudied. Nevertheless, with the help of the sources enumerated above, it is possible, if only in the broadest outline, to reconstruct the historic truth about the person of Chingis-Khan, the " savage of genius " who built an empire that influenced so profoundly the destiny of the whole world.

I

THE MONGOLS IN THE TWELFTH CENTURY

THE country that lies north of China and of Eastern Turkestan, and which to-day constitutes Mongolia and the southern belt of Siberia, was inhabited in the twelfth century by a number of nomad tribes. Most of them were Mongols, but it was only later that they were to adopt that name, which is also that given them to-day by Europeans. A number of ethnological traits, and especially their language, show the Mongols to be closely related with the Turks, and with the Manchu or Tunguz group of peoples.

In the twelfth century the ancestors of the Mongols lived divided into clans (*omuk*), that were further subdivided into sub-clans or "bones" (*yasun*). Sometimes several clans would coalesce into a tribe or small nation (*ulus*). Such coalitions were brought into existence by a variety of causes, and the forms they took were equally various.

Sometimes they would be effected by an outstanding war-lord, or by a clan that for some reason or other had acquired exceptional power and influence and welded into a political unity several clans or tribes. In other cases closely related clans formed tribal confederations that did not necessarily take definite political forms. Consciousness of kinship, identity of dialect, common traditions and institutions were enough for a clan to feel itself part of a larger tribal unit. The relation of a class to a tribe (*ulus*) or confederation of tribes (*öl*) was the same as that of an individual member, family or "bone" to the clan.

The clans and tribes of the Mongols fell into two main sections: the pastoralists of the steppe, and the hunters of the forest. The two sections spoke dialects of the same Mongolian language and differed from each other mainly in their mode of life and in their cultural level. All these tribes do not seem to have had any consciousness of common origin; they did not regard themselves as one nation, and had no common ethnical name. The individual clans—especially the pastoral ones —had as a rule at their head an aristocratic family, from whose ranks came the individual leaders with titles as *bagadur* (hero); *sechen* (wise); *bilgê*

(wise); *t'ai-tsi* (prince), *noyan* (duke, leader). The leaders of tribes or other confederations (*ulus*) bore the title of *khan* (*kan*), king, or of *kagan*, emperor. Frequently the nomad khans received from their more civilized Chinese neighbours the title of *Wang*. In general, owing to the influence of the more civilized nations, whose neighbours the nomadic Mongols were, or who had previously lived in the lands occupied in the twelfth century by the Mongols, foreign titles were frequent among them. By the side of the Chinese titles *Wang* and *T'ai-tsi*, we find Tangut or Tibetan (*gambo* or *djagambo*) and Turki terms, as *tegin*, *bilgê*, and others.

Some clans were famous for their ancient and aristocratic lineage; such clans easily branched out into new clans and "bones," because the leaders, the *bagadurs* and *noyans*, strove to become independent, by attracting subjects and followers of their own, who would enable them to take possession of separate and independent grazing grounds in the vast expanse of the steppes. The one great object of the Mongol pastoral aristocracy, of the aristocratic clans of the *bagadurs* and *noyans*, was to find convenient grazing grounds (*nutuk*, Turki *yurt*) and a sufficient number of

vassals, subjects and slaves to look after their live stock and to act as servants in the tents of the nobility. Among the peoples of the forest (*oi-in igren*) the aristocracy seems to have played a less prominent part. The forest clans often had for their heads shamans, magicians who were reputed to have intercourse with the spirits. A shaman that was at the same time the leader of a clan or tribe, bore the title of *beki*, a title occasionally borne, however, also by members of the steppe aristocracy.

Below the aristocracy stood the commoners, who were called *arat*, or by the old Turki term *karachu*, and the slaves, *bogul*.

A prominent position among the Mongol tribes and clans belonged in the twelfth century to the Tatar tribe, whose grazing grounds were in the extreme east of the Mongol territory, in the vicinity of lake Buir-Nor. Another large tribe, the Kereits, lived between the Khangai and Kentei mountains, in the valleys of the Orkhon and of the Tola; farther west, the country between the Khangai and the Altai mountains was occupied by the Naimans. Smaller tribes and clans lived interspersed between these three major tribes; the Tatars, Kereits and the Naimans were themselves

subdivided into a multitude of sub-tribes, clans and "bones."

As the Tatar tribe was numerous and had by the twelfth century acquired considerable importance, members of other Mongol clans and tribes often adopted the famous name of Tatar; so that their own tribal or clan name ceased to be known except to their nearest neighbours. The habit of minor tribes of adopting the appellation of some powerful and related neighbour, even though they might be in hostile relations with the latter, is reported by ethnologists from various parts of the world (e.g. from the Caucasus, the Altai, and contemporary Mongolia). Rashîdu'd-Dîn speaks of this habit very clearly: "On account of their (i.e. of the Tatars') exceptional greatness and consideration, other clans of the Turks (i.e. of nomads whether of Mongol or Turki origin), having brought into confusion their pedigrees, divisions and names, came to be known by that name, and all came to be called Tatars. And all these divers clans considered their own greatness and dignity in that they counted themselves as belonging to the Tatars and became known by their name, just as in our own times, owing to the greatness of Chingis-Khan and of his clan,

which is that of Mongol, the other Turkish tribes, each of which had a distinct name and an appellation of its own, have begun to call themselves Mongols." The name of Tatar was subsequently carried to the farthest ends of the world, and the Mongols became known first in Asia, and afterwards in Europe by the name of Tatars; the Europeans extended the name to all those nations that had been conquered by the Mongols, and who as subjects of the latter took part in their invasions; so it is that we still give the name of Tatar to certain Turki peoples, though they have nothing to do with the original Tatars.

Between the Tatar and the Kereit territories, along the Onon and the Kerulen rivers, there lived a multitude of pastoral and hunting tribes and clans, one of which, the clan of Mongol, attained in the twelfth century to such importance that its leader, Kabul, assumed the title of Kagan. He was strong enough to undertake distant expeditions into China, which was then ruled by a foreign dynasty, the Jurjen, better known by the Chinese name of Kin, i.e. Golden, Dynasty. Kotula, son of Kabul, also bore the title of *Kagan*, waged wars with the Kins, and acquired renown for his exploits. It would appear that the original name of the

aristocratic clan of which Kabul was a member, was Borjigin, and that it took the name of Mongol, only after it had subjugated and unified several neighbouring clans and tribes, thus forming a new political unit, a united nation, an *ulus*. It was this *ulus* that was given the name of Mongol, in commemoration of an ancient and mighty nation or clan, whose memory has been preserved by oral tradition.

About the middle of the twelfth century the power of the *ulus* of Mongol was destroyed by the Tatars, of whom the Kins made clever use to their own ends, in order to free themselves from the constant invasions of that nascent nomadic power.

II

BIRTH AND BOYHOOD OF CHINGIS-KHAN

ABOUT 1155, by the Onon river, near the landmark Deliun-Boldak (still known by that name) in the family of Yesugei-Bagatur there was born a son. In his right hand the new-born held a clot of blood. He was to become known to the world under the name of Chingis-Khan. Yesugei-Bagatur belonged to the Kiyat "bone" of the Borjigin clan, and was the son of Bardan-Bagatur, second son of Kabul-Khan. We find in our sources a variety of information concerning Yesugei. Some of them represent him as a mere "decurion" (commander of ten), others as the head of nearly all the "Mongol" tribes. According to the heroic "Secret History," whose account contains nothing improbable, and is, in the main, confirmed by the evidence of other sources, Yesugei-Bagatur was a typical aristocrat of the steppes. Both his elder and his younger brothers—Nekun-t'aitsi and Daaritai-Otchigin—seem to have used his grazing-

grounds and recognized him as their head. He had slaves and subjects of the commoner class, and his following included some of the related Taichiut clans, so that he was always able to assemble a sufficient number of men for his raids and forays, and could always be more or less secure as to the safety of his camp. Besides being of noble blood, he was a renowned warrior and he did not belie his title of Bagatur: it was this that assured his influence in the steppes.

With the aid of his brothers, Yesugei overcame a Merkit man (the Merkits were a tribe whose pastures lay north of the Kereit country) who was bringing home as his betrothed a girl of the Olkunut tribe. Her name was Oyelun. Yesugei made her his chief wife, and later on she came to be called Oyelun-Yeke, i.e. Mother Oyelun, or Oyelun-Fujin, i.e. Queen Oyelun.

The birth of her son coincided with Yesugei-Bagatur's returning home from an expedition against the Tatars with whom he often had to fight to help one or other of his kinsmen. This time the Mongol raid had been successful, and Yesugei brought with him two captive Tatars, the eldest of whom was called Temuchin. In accordance with the old Turko-Mongol usage of

naming the newborn after some conspicuous circumstance connected with his birth, Yesugei gave his son the name of Temuchin. In later years, Yesugei-Bagatur and Oyelun had three more sons: Juchi-Kasar, Kachiun-Ölchi and Temuge-Otchigin, and one daughter, Temulun. Besides by his other wife Yesugei had two more sons, Bekter and Belgutei.

When Temuchin was nine, his father decided to find him a wife. The tribal constitution of the Mongols implied exogamy, that is to say it obliged the men of a given clan to take wives from some other clan that was not considered closely akin to their own. Consequently, owing to the constant feuds, wars and raids, the kidnapping of marriageable women was a frequent occurrence (witness the case of Yesugei-Bagatur himself). Another solution was for clans to conclude agreements for the mutual exchange of women. The respective members of two clans that had entered on such an agreement called each other *kuda*. When Yesugei-Bagatur decided to find a wife for his eldest son he went to his wife's kinsmen of the Olkunut tribe. The Olkunuts had no objection to one of their girls being acquired by a member of the Mongol-Borjigin clan, instead of becoming the

property of a Merkit, for the Olkunuts had a matrimonial agreement of long standing with the nations that had been united by Kabul Khan under the name of Mongol.

On his way Yesugei-Bagatur chanced to meet Dai-Sechen, a member of the Khungirat tribe, one of whose branches the Olkunuts were. On learning the business on which Yesugei-Bagatur was going, Dai-Sechen, who was struck by the appearance of young Temuchin, proposed that the Bagatur of the Kiyat-Borjigin clan should pay him a visit and see whether his daughter, the beautiful Bortë, would not be a suitable wife for Yesugei's son. Yesugei consented, and went to Dai-Sechen's camp, accompanied by Temuchin. Bortë, who was ten (that is to say a year older than Temuchin) produced so excellent an impression on Yesugei-Bagatur, that on the following day he proposed on behalf of Temuchin ; the proposal was accepted. Yesugei presented Dai-Sechen with his remount horse and left Temuchin to stay there in the quality of future son-in-law (*kurgen*). This, according to Mongol custom, definitely confirmed Yesugei's decision to become related to the house of Dai-Sechen. The Khungirat tribe occupied the country between that of the Onguts who lived

near the Great Wall of China and the Tatars. To the east they extended as far as the former territory of the Kitan, who had conquered China in the tenth century. Owing to this geographical position, the Khungirats stood under stronger Chinese influence than most other Mongol tribes. Together with the Onguts, they were classified by the Chinese as "white"—i.e. civilized, "barbarians." The legend of Temuchin's long stay in China may owe its origin to his life among the Khungirats.

But Temuchin's life in Dai-Sechen's house as the latter's future son-in-law was cut short by an unforeseen event. On his way home Yesugei-Bagatur met some Tatars that had assembled for a feast. Whether he simply wished to refresh himself, or whether he was obeying the old Mongol custom demanding that every chance passer-by should join a feast—Yesugei-Bagatur stopped with those Tatars. The Tatars recognized him, and remembering his raids on their kinsmen, and especially the captivity of two of them, they profited by the occasion and mixed poison in the food they gave him. As soon as he had resumed his journey Yesugei felt ill. By the time he reached home he realized that he had been poisoned

by the Tatars, and that he was done for. He summoned his retainer Munlik, son of Tadai-Charaga, and told him what the Tatars had done to him. Feeling his death approach he entrusted Munlik with the care of his family ; telling him to bring back Temuchin from Dai-Sechen of the Khungirats as soon as possible. Soon after that Yesugei-Bagatur died (*c.* 1165).

Munlik set off at once to obey the last orders of Yesugei-Bagatur. Fearing possible complications he said nothing to Dai-Sechen of the poisoning and death of his Bagatur ; but only that, having become heartsick for Temuchin, Yesugei wanted him home. Dai-Sechen consented to let his future son-in-law leave him, but insisted on his being allowed to return as soon as possible. So Temuchin went to his native camp with Munlik, who in accordance with Yesugei-Bagatur's testament was now given the name of *echigê*—father.

Soon after that, for Temuchin and his nearest kin, for his mother and brothers, there began hard times, when they became acquainted with every privation and misery. More than once did fate bring Temuchin to the brink of ruin, but each time, owing to some unexpected change of circumstances, he emerged unscathed from danger. A succession

of hairbreadth escapes could not fail to leave a profound impression on the boy's mind. From his earliest youth Temuchin showed himself to be steady in adversity, shrewd and cautious rather than brave or adventurous. A patient steadiness remained throughout his life his main characteristic.

Temuchin's adversities began immediately after his father's death. His kinsmen, the heads of the Taichiut tribe, Targutai-Kiriltuk and Todoyan-Girtë, sons of Anbagai-Kagan, felt that the disappearance of such a powerful personality as Yesugei had been, opened for them opportunities of freer and more independent activity. The widows of Anbagai-Kagan who had quarrelled with Oyelun incited them to secession. The Taichiuts decided to forsake the family of Yesugei-Bagatur, to trek away and to leave them to their fate.

While they were making preparations for leaving the Borjigin camp Munlik's father, Charaga, tried to persuade them to remain, but the Taichiuts would not listen to him, and even wounded the old man with a spear thrust. Oyelun was a woman of wisdom and decision. She assembled the small number of men that had remained loyal, raised the banner with the signs of Yesugei-Bagatur, and

started in pursuit of the seceders. She succeeded even in making part of them return; but it soon became apparent that the affair was beyond mending; the Bagatur was no more, his sons were children, and a woman, however great her energy, was powerless to achieve anything. Before long Oyelun and her children saw themselves abandoned by all. After the secession of the Taichiuts, other relatives—as well as the vassals and slaves, of whom Yesugei had accumulated so many—followed their example, one by one. Even Munlik, whose charge it was to look after the orphaned family, appears to have abandoned Oyelun and parted camps with her. All that remained with the widow of Yesugei were her own children, Yesugei's second wife with her offspring, and a few servant women.

The deserted family were no longer in a condition to graze their stock on their own pasture, even though there was little of it left. But Oyelun did not despair. She continued to bring up her sons in the ideas of the pastoral aristocracy. She impressed on them the idea that they belonged by right to that class, and that it was their duty to make every effort to emerge from their present situation. It was probably from his mother's mouth that Temuchin learned the old traditions

and legends of his clan, about their wise forefather (*ömegen*) Alun-Goa and the mythical ancestor (*öbugen*) Bodunchar, the founder of the Borjigin clan. From her also Temuchin may have heard stories of more recent times, of the times that had been so glorious for his kinsmen and forefathers, of Kabul-Khan, of Anbagai-Khan, tortured to death by the Kins in China, of the famous hero Kotula-Khan. Oyelun-Yeke was a wise woman and well versed in " ancient words."

The daily occupation of the sons of Yesugei-Bagatur was no longer to graze their herds of horses or to supervise their shepherds ; they had to stoop to fishing and hunting small game ; neither were they above collecting wild onion, garlic and other roots. From the point of view of the pastoral nomad of the steppes such an existence was the most wretched imaginable.

In the meantime Temuchin and his brothers grew up and became youths and men. Temuchin was tall ; he was bright-eyed and gifted. Though his brothers Kasar and Bekter surpassed him in physical strength, he had already the characteristic that was to survive to the end of his life : love of power. Neither did he tolerate being deprived of anything he regarded as his by right. These sides

of his nature were to lead him to fratricide. But it does not appear that in his youth Temuchin was exceptionally heartless or bloodthirsty. We are told, for instance, that on learning that old Charaga had been wounded by the Taichiuts he went to visit him, and that on seeing the old retainer heavily wounded he broke into tears.

For some time Temuchin and Kasar had begun to notice that their half-brothers Bekter and Belgutei had acquired the habit of appropriating part of their game. They complained to their mother, but Oyelun-Yeke deprecated their quarrelling with their brothers : "Apart from our own shadow we have no friends ; apart from a horse's tail we have no whip," she said, and reminded them of their duty of chastising the Taichiuts. In spite of her words Temuchin and Kasar went, and approaching Bekter from in front and behind, shot him dead. The cruel deed roused the wrath of Oyelun-Yeke, but Temuchin himself does not seem to have been greatly perturbed by it. The attitude of others, including the mother and brother of Bekter, was equally light-hearted. In those times of constant feuds and raids people were accustomed to murder, even between members of the same family ; a murderer was not regarded as a criminal. Quarrel-

someness, the natural product of the aristocratic tribal constitution and of the absence of law, was the rule in all the Mongol camps; and the Tatars had the reputation of excelling all others in this respect.

III

YOUTH AND MARRIAGE

A LITTLE later there occurred an event that set Temuchin thinking of things in general, and most particularly of his own destiny, and confirmed him in the belief that above his person and his will was the will of the " Everlasting Blue Sky " (*Möngkê Tengri*). He had of course always known that above the gods he worshipped there was the Supreme Deity, but this time its will was conveyed to him with unwonted force.

The Taichiut chief Targutai-Kiriltuk had heard that after he had abandoned it the family of Yesugei-Bagatur had not perished and that the eldest son was now grown up a promising and fine fellow. Fearing that the lad might become a leader dangerous to the Taichiuts and to himself Targutai decided to capture Temuchin. Assembling his clansmen he decided to raid Oyelun's camp. The sudden attack produced much fear

and disorder; everyone tried to escape into the woods; the small children were hid in the cleft of a rock; Belgutei started felling trees and building a barricade while Kasar, a skilled archer, shot arrows at the enemy. The Taichiuts shouted out that they wanted no one but Temuchin and demanded he should be delivered. Terrified, Temuchin jumped on to his horse and galloped away into the mountain forest. The Taichiuts noticing his flight set out to pursue him; as they could not penetrate into the thicket they surrounded the wood and mounted guard at every one of its issues.

Temuchin remained in the forest for several days. Twice did he attempt to come out, but each time he was held back by strange phenomena, which he interpreted as omens, sent by the sky which took care of him and forbade him to come out of his hiding place. The first time, while he was leading his horse by the rein it seemed to him that the saddle fell to the ground in an inexplicable way, for the saddle-girths were well fastened; another time he saw an enormous white stone which seemed to bar his way out of the wood. After remaining several days in the forest, Temuchin ended by coming out for fear of starvation. He was immediately seized by the Taichiuts, put into stocks

and carried away to the Taichiut camp where he was kept prisoner, and transferred every day from one tent to another.

It was spring and on the sixteenth day of the Fourth Moon the Taichiuts gave a great feast on the banks of the Onon. Only one young lad was left to mount guard over the prisoner. Temuchin seized his opportunity, struck the guard with the edge of his stocks, and ran away. He reached the wooded banks of the Onon, climbed down into the river, and remained immersed up to the neck, with nothing but his head above the water.

When they discovered that their prisoner had escaped the Taichiuts started a search. It was a clear moonlit night. Sorgan-Shira of the Suldus tribe, who was staying with the Taichiuts, discovered Temuchin and said to him: "It is just for qualities like this that the Taichiuts hate you and say that there is fire in your eyes and light on your face. Remain where you are, I will not tell them." Sorgan-Shira succeeded in persuading the Taichiuts to put off the search till the next morning, and at once informed Temuchin of this, advising him to escape as soon as he could to his home. But Temuchin saw that he had no chance of escaping so long as he wore the stocks; he crept

to Sorgan-Shira's tent, hoping to find further help there. He easily found the tent by the sound of the churning of mare's milk. He knew that this was the occupation of Sorgan-Shira's household for he had occasion to spend the night there, and had been treated, for a prisoner, well. His hopes were fulfilled; after some moments' hesitation Sorgan-Shira, upheld by his sons Chilaun and Chinbai, received Temuchin and hid him in a cart, covering him with wool; the stocks were taken off him.

The following morning the Taichiuts started searching all the tents in the camp, and came to Sorgan-Shira's. They were on the point of searching the cart with the wool under which Temuchin lay hidden, when Sorgan-Shira put them off by the remark: "It is too hot for anyone to be able to survive under all that wool." When the Taichiuts were gone, Sorgan-Shira and his household secretly equipped Temuchin for his route and bade him godspeed.

On his return home, Temuchin moved his camp and all his family to Mount Burkan-Kaldun, which was traditionally the old grazing ground (*nutuk*, *yurt*) of the Mongol-Borjigin clan. There they made a livelihood now by hunting marmots and

wild mice. Such were the pursuits that occupied the youth of a man before whom mighty kingdoms were to shake, and who was to find no limits for the fulfilment of his desires.

One day eight horses belonging to Temuchin's family were driven away by unknown thieves. Temuchin hastened to their pursuit on the only remaining horse, which had been saved by the merest chance, Belgutei being away hunting marmots on it at the moment of the theft.

On his way after the thieves Temuchin met a young man who struck him as adroit and with extraordinary readiness lent him his help. The adroit lad's name was Bogurchi, son of Nagu-Bayan, of the Arulat clan. On his way back home Temuchin visited the camp of Nagu-Bayan who said to him: "You two young men must always be friends and never part." They obeyed the old man's will. From the start they became attached to each other and for the whole of their lives they remained close friends. Bogurchi afterwards became one of Chingis-Khan's most prominent generals and truest fellow-soldiers, while the latter never ceased to entertain a complete confidence, respect, and affection for him.

On the whole this expedition appears to have

encouraged Temuchin. He began to feel himself a man, able to defend himself and his own and who was not alone in the world. It was then that he decided to go after the Khungirat girl who had been betrothed to him when a child. He set off for Dai-Sechen's pastures followed by his brother Belgutei. Dai-Sechen was overjoyed to see Temuchin. He proved true to his old engagement and Bortë became the wife of Temuchin. Her dowry included a coat of black sables ; Temuchin's fortune at that time was so small that its appearance in his home was felt to be an event of some importance, which he decided to make use of for a specific purpose.

The Mongol clan by now had lost all political importance. But it was the turn of the Tatars to appear dangerous to the Kins ; so the latter, true to the immemorial traditions of Chinese policy, lost no time in inciting against the Tatars other tribes of Mongol nomads. The Kereits were the most powerful rivals to pit against the Tatars and the Kins did everything to bring about war between the two tribes. Togrul-Khan, the Kereit ruler, was granted by the Chinese the title of Wang and is consequently usually called the Wang-Khan. The Kereits were a pastoral nation and spoke

Mongolian, but culturally they stood somewhat above the Tatars, the Taichiuts and most other Mongols. Christians of the Nestorian persuasion were fairly numerous among them; they were in regular relations with the civilized Tangut or Si-Hsia nation, who at that time ruled the North-Western provinces of China, as well as with the peoples of Turkestan and Jety-su.[1] The Wang-Khan became, rather undeservedly, a famous personage, especially in Europe where legendary tales were circulated, and enthusiastically believed, about a King-Priest Johannes ("Prester John") gloriously ruling a Christian nation somewhere in the distant East. The title of Wang-Khan became the occasion to identify the legendary Prester John with the Kereit ruler. In reality Togrul-Khan of the Kereits was an insignificant personality. He was cruel and treacherous, and for all his energy, he entirely lacked the qualities most indispensable in a ruler of a nomadic empire. On several occasions, for that reason, he had found himself in difficult situations, out of which he had been at times helped by Yesugei-Bagatur.

[1] Jety-Su (Russian "Semirechie")—"Land of the Seven Rivers," includes the country north-west of the Tien Shan mountains, and of the Dsungarian Gate. It is now included in the Republics of Qàzaqstan and Qirghizia.

The Wang-Khan and Yesugei-Bagatur regarded each other as friends and adopted brothers (*anda*). Now Temuchin decided to remind the Wang-Khan of himself, hoping to improve his position with the latter's help and protection.

Though by no means brilliant, Temuchin's circumstances had greatly improved by that time. He was no longer a God-forsaken outcast. He could feel himself to be, to some extent, an independent aristocrat of the steppes. For indeed he was of noble blood, the head of a family that included two or three doughty warriors such as Kasar and Belgutei, was well married, and had at least one vassal—Bogurchi.

On his way home with his bride Temuchin sent Belgutei for Bogurchi telling him to come to his camp. It is recorded that Bogurchi started immediately on his way, without even waiting to tell his father.

IV

THE RISE OF CHINGIS

SO, accompanied by Kasar and Belgutei, Temuchin took Bortë's sable coat to the Wang-Khan who was then camping by the banks of the Tola. The Wang-Khan received the sons of his *anda* with hospitality. He was pleased with the present they brought, and promised Temuchin his aid in bringing together the kinsmen and vassals that had seceded.

More good news awaited Temuchin at home. The old smith Jarchiutai came to present his son Jelmë, saying: "When you were born at Deliun-Boldak, I gave you a swaddling-band, lined with sable fur, and made you a present of my son Jelmë, but as he was young, I kept him at home to bring him up. Now I present him to you; let him saddle your horse and open your door." With these words he transferred his son to Temuchin. Besides being directly advantageous to Temuchin

and besides flattering his aristocratic feeling, the donation of Jelmë made him realize that he was indeed on the way towards becoming a proper pastoral lord, and that his milieu was beginning to recognize in him an effective member of the steppe aristocracy.

Soon after that, Temuchin had to go through considerable troubles and once more became acquainted with the reverses of the life of a nomadic lord. On this occasion he showed himself cautious to the point of pusillanimity; but again circumstances took such a turn that Temuchin, who knew how to wait patiently, was ultimately the winner.

A band of Merkits, led by Toktoa, of the Uduit-Merkit clan, desirous to avenge Yesugei's carrying away the betrothed of one of their clansmen, came one day unexpectedly to raid Temuchin's camp. Temuchin's people took the enemy for the Taichiuts. They all betook themselves to their saddles, while Temuchin himself galloped away to Mount Burkan-Kaldun, without even noticing that his wife, Bortë, had remained without a horse. She was taken by the Merkits, as well as Temuchin's stepmother, the mother of Belgutei.

After remaining in concealment for some time Temuchin sent out his men to see what was going

on. On hearing that the Merkits were far away, he descended the mountain, struck his breast and exclaimed, lifting his face to the sky: "Mount Burkan has protected my miserable life; henceforward I will ever sacrifice to it, and bequeath to my sons and grandsons the duty of sacrificing to it." After that Temuchin loosened his belt and hung it round his neck, took off his cap and hung it on his hand; then striking his breast, he knelt down nine times and made a libation of fermented mare's-milk. That was at that time the Mongol way of worshipping their sacred objects: by taking off belt and cap they expressed their complete submission to the supreme will; for cap and belt worn in the usual way were for the Mongols the symbol of their owner's personal freedom.

Having paid this tribute to religious sentiment Temuchin started actively to redress his wrongs. He went about it so skilfully that Jamuga-Sechen as well as the Wang-Khan agreed to give him their help and declared war against the Merkits who had carried away Bortë. Jamuga-Sechen was a kinsman of Temuchin's, for he belonged to the Jadarat (or Jajirat) clan, whose mythical ancestor Bodunchar was also the ancestor of Temuchin's clan. Jamuga was a capable and active man. He had

assembled around him a considerable number of noble vassals and of common folk; his following included men who should have belonged to Temuchin, as they had originally been brought together by Yesugei-Bagatur. Jamuga used to meet Temuchin when they were small boys; once when they played on the ice on the Onon they had exchanged presents and become adopted brothers (*anda*). Temuchin had not much trouble in persuading his father's *anda* and his own—the Wang-Khan and Jamuga-Sechen—to help him, for both had grievances of long standing against the Merkits.

The campaign of the Wang-Khan and Jamuga against the Merkits, in which Temuchin and his men took part, was completely successful. Temuchin's wife Bortë was liberated. The Merkits, with their chief Toktoa, fled leaving in the hands of the victors a large booty. "The three hundred men that had taken part in the raid to Mount Burkan, and had rode three times round it, were exterminated to a man; of their wives those fit for matrimony were made wives, those fit for slavery were made slaves," says the Mongol account. As soon as he had his wife safely back, Temuchin took measures to stop the pursuit of the Merkits—for he had reasons not to wish their complete rout by the Wang-Khan

and Jamuga. For Temuchin the campaign had been particularly successful, for it would appear that he succeeded in obtaining from Jamuga the people the latter owed him ; but above all Temuchin had shown himself ; and the common action had been the occasion for entering on relations with members of many clans. He began to be talked about. In returning thanks to his protectors, he used words in which he again alluded to the Sky as his principal protector : " Wang-Khan, my father, and you *anda* Jamuga ! Through your aid the Sky has given me the strength to avenge my wrongs."

On their return from the Merkit campaign Temuchin and Jamuga camped together at a place called Korgunak-Jubur on the Onon. Here they exchanged presents from the booty they had taken, thus cementing their old friendship. Under a spreading tree they held a feast, and in the night they slept under the same blanket. In Jamuga's camp Temuchin had the opportunity of meeting the leaders and members of many clans. In spite of his friendship with Jamuga-Sechen, he lent a willing ear to words such as those said by Mukali of the Jalair clan. Mukali told him that under this same spreading tree at this same place of Korgunak-

Jubur, where they had just been feasting with Jamuga-Sechen, Kotula, the last of the Mongol clan to bear the title of Khan, had danced and made merry on the occasion of his election to that dignity. Since those times the importance of the Mongol clan had fallen and they had had no more Khans. But the Everlasting Blue Sky would not forsake its chosen clan, the clan of its own lineal descendants. A hero would arise from the Mongol clan who would once more bring together all his kin, become a powerful Khan and take vengeance on his foes. Temuchin was this Khan to come; Mukali felt that such was the decree of the Everlasting Sky; it was already being talked about; old men like Mukali's own father confirmed the rumour; all were convinced that with the aid of the Sky Temuchin would become Khan and exalt his clan.

For a year and a half Temuchin and Jamuga-Sechen remained together. This was long enough for Temuchin to realize that his way could not be that of Jamuga. By degrees he came to believe in that which Mukali had said and towards which he was impelled by his own imperious nature. He came to believe that he was indeed destined by the Sky to revive the greatness of his clan and become the successor of the Mongol Khans. He began to

realize that he could only attain to the desired end when he had trusty partisans that would be powerful tools in his hands. It became his ambition to assemble his clan, and with it all the steppe aristocracy to whom his views were familiar and sympathetic. Recalling to mind the miserable years of his youth, he aspired after the free and plentiful life of a nomadic lord; for he felt and knew that by right of birth, as well as by right of his commanding personality, he was entitled to it. In Jamuga-Sechen he discerned tendencies of a different kind: he saw the latter's concern for the common people, for all those who formed the lowest layer of Mongol society. Temuchin's outlook was aristocratic—Jamuga's was democratic. It is not to be wondered at that before long they quarrelled. This is how that important turning point in the life of Chingis-Khan is described in the *Secret History*:

"One day Temuchin and Jamuga moved their camp away from that place (Korgunak-Jubur); it was summer, and the sixteenth day of the fourth moon. Temuchin and Jamuga rode in front of the waggons; while they rode Jamuga said: 'To-day, if we camp on the hill-slope, those who tend the horses will get tents; if we camp by the stream, those who tend the sheep and lambs will get food

for their throat.' Temuchin made no reply, but reining up his horse waited for his mother, Oyelun; when she rode up he repeated to her Jamuga's words and said: 'I did not understand his words and said nothing in reply; I purposely rode up to you, my mother, to ask you to explain them.' His mother had not time to say a word, before Bortë spoke out: 'Of Jamuga-Anda people say that he loves the new and despises the old; now he has had enough of us. Do not his words conceal some hostile intention against us? We must not stop; we must march on through the night; it is better to be parted from him.' Temuchin said: 'Bortë speaks sense.' So he did not stop [when Jamuga stopped] and went on into the night. At the end of that night march, when it began to dawn, behold, there were men of the Jalair clan . . . and of the Kiyan clan . . . and of the Baarin clan; there were Korchi and old Usun . . . and all the men of the Mene-Baarin clan, all following Temuchin."

By "those that tend horses" Jamuga had meant the rich, the upper class of pastoral society, the steppe aristocracy; by "those who tend the sheep and the lambs"—the common people, the *karachu*, with whom he sympathized. Temuchin did not

understand Jamuga's circumlocution, but felt a hostile intention in it, and the remark of his wife Bortë, about Jamuga "liking the new and despising the old," confirmed him in his decision to part company with the democratically inclined Jamuga with whom he could no longer remain a companion without going counter to his own interests.

Temuchin's secession from Jamuga became, as it were, the signal for a great number of aristocratic families to do the same and to flock to the seceder. Individual aristocrats of various clans began joining him, families, whole clans, "with all their camping" put up their camps by the side of his. Among those who presented themselves now to Temuchin were his paternal uncle, Daaritai-Otchigin; the chief of the Jurki clan; the eldest branch of the descendants of the famous Kabul-Kagan; Temuchin's first cousin Kuchar; and Altan-Otchigin, the son of the famous warrior Kotula-Kagan, the last Khan of the Mongol clan. Some of these aristocrats were attracted by the personality, the talents and the self-discipline of Temuchin; he appeared to them as the ideal steppe warrior, the fittest man to be placed at the head of the aristocratic clans and to lead them to

victory and to the conquest of rich pastures, cattle and skilled herdsmen. Some, moreover, doubted not that Temuchin was preordained by the Sky to become overlord. Korchi, of the Baarin clan, when he joined Temuchin, said to him : " The Sky has ordered it that Temuchin should be the Lord of the Kingdom. . . . That is what the Spirit disclosed to me and set before my eyes ; and I disclose it to you, Temuchin." But others—Altan, son of Kotula-Kagan, seems to have been one of them—settled their choice on Temuchin, because he seemed to them least dangerous ; they hoped that he would become an obedient instrument in their hands, for many of them were of nobler blood than the son of Yesugei-Bagatur.

Not without hesitation, and only after Kuchar, Altan and other members of the highest nobility had refused to be elected Khans, all settled their choice on Temuchin.

" After having taken advice with all the others," the Secret History of the Mongols tells us, "Altan, Kucha, and Sacha-Beki (great-grandson of Kabul-Khan by his eldest son) announced to Temuchin : ' We have decided to proclaim you Kagan. When you are Kagan we shall be in the front in every battle against your foes and if we capture beautiful

girls and women we will give them to you. We will start earliest for the chase and the animals we catch we will give to you. If in battle we disobey your commands, or if in time of peace we do any injury to your interests, then you will take from us our wives and chattels and leave us to our fate in the empty wilderness.' Having taken this oath, they proclaimed Temuchin Kagan and gave him the name of Chingis."

Such were the words in which the Mongol aristocracy defined their relations to their Kagan and leader and took the oath of allegiance, at the same time formulating their demands: The duty of the pastoral king was to lead his companions to victory, in order to procure all that was considered good by the steppe nomad—beautiful captives, good horses, and plentiful hunting grounds; while the aristocratic warriors who profited by all this would give their Khan the best part of their booty.

It is very difficult to explain the meaning of the word "Chingis," which became famous throughout the world as the component of Temuchin's title. It is only a plausible guess, that it was the name of a spirit of light, worshipped at that time by the Shamanist Mongols. The

supposition is confirmed by the fact that many regarded Temuchin as predestined by the Sky, and Temuchin himself appears to have given much thought to the Everlasting Sky's intervention in his destiny. It would be superfluous to insist on the advantage derived by Temuchin from the spread of such a conception. Neither did he miss any opportunity of putting it to good use in his own interests.

The first business of the newly-chosen Khan was the organization of his "tent" or headquarters. Temuchin knew from bitter experience how easy it was for the nomads of the steppes and hills to make sudden raids on each other. He fully realized the necessity of finding himself a safe refuge, a definite, if movable, centre that might become a rallying point, the citadel, as it were, of his nascent nomadic Empire. So he formed a small retinue of archers and sword bearers, whose duty it became to be always by his tent. He further applied himself to organize the protection and tending of the herds of horses, and the training of remounts—services of primary importance in a nomad community. He also placed at his constant disposal men whom he might be able to send about "like arrows," according to his will and needs.

However insignificant these measures may seem, at the time and place even they took the appearance of complex organizing work and bore immediate palpable results. The nomads of Central Asia were always noted for their extreme improvidence and laziness; for the whole life of the pastoral nomad, with its ignorance of any kind of continuous labour, predisposes him in that direction.

As soon as he became Khan, Temuchin remembered his two oldest followers, and wished to encourage and reward them; for such was his character: he was severe, but generous and liberal in return for services rendered. So he addressed Bogurchi and Jelmë in these words: "I have not forgotten it in my heart, that at the time when I was without a following you two, before any others, became my followers: now you shall take precedence over the whole assembly." While to the warriors and aristocracy assembled around him he said: "You, that are assembled here, you parted with Jamuga and decided to join me. If the Sky preserves me and helps me, all of you, my old friends, will ultimately become my happy companions."

V

CHINGIS-KHAN UNITES THE MONGOL TRIBES AND FORMS A NOMADIC EMPIRE. STRUGGLE WITH THE WANG-KHAN

THE Wang-Khan turned out to be a short-sighted statesman: he took no measures against Temuchin, and was pleased when the son of his *anda* assumed the title of Khan. "It is very good," he said on receiving the news, "that Chingis should have been made Kagan; for how, indeed, could you Mongols do without a Kagan? So mind you do not undo what you have done by common consent." Chingis-Khan's relations with Jamuga remained also satisfactory for a time, but before long their separation developed into open conflict: the aristocratic policy of the one was found to clash with the democratic policy of the other.

An incident which throws a characteristic light on the manners and customs of nomad society,

served for pretext. A younger brother of Jamuga drove away a herd of horses belonging to a follower of Chingis-Khan. The victim pursued the raider, overtook and killed him and drove the stolen horses back to his camp. Hearing of this Jamuga assembled his followers and advanced against Chingis-Khan. The latter advanced to his encounter, but was discomfited and forced to retreat towards the Onon river. Jamuga did not pursue him, but took savage vengeance on some aristocrats that had fallen into his hands. This had an immediate effect: several aristocratic clans with their followings seceded from Jamuga and went over to Chingis. Among the seceders was Munlik, the man whom Yesugei-Bagatur on his deathbed had entrusted with the care of his family. One of Munlik's seven sons was Kökchu, a renowned shaman and sorcerer.

In the meantime the Kins had found the moment propitious to attempt a concerted attack against the Tatars. The Kin army was to attack them on the one side, the Wang-Khan with his Kereits on the other. Chingis gladly took part in this expedition, which gave him an opportunity for avenging the murder of his father, and for giving fresh proof of his loyalty to the powerful Wang-Khan. He

also hoped to make some profit for himself and his followers at the expense of the Tatars. The latter had already suffered one defeat at the hands of the Kins when they were attacked from two sides by the Wang-Khan and Chingis and completely routed. It was on this occasion that the Kereit chief received from the grateful Kin Emperor the title of Wang-Khan by which he became generally known. Temuchin was rewarded by the less ambitious title of *jaukhuri*, Military Commander of the Frontier.

It was soon after this campaign that Chingis-Khan made it obvious to all that he was indeed lord and khan, and that his will was not to be thwarted with impunity. The Jurki clan, headed by its leaders Sacha-Beki and Daichu, the great-grandsons of Kabul Khan, by the eldest branch, had refused to take part in the expedition against the Tatars. Other offences were raked up against them, but that was the chief charge. Chingis-Khan attacked them with all his army, destroyed their camps and reduced all their people to captivity. In spite of their high lineage, Sacha-Beki and Daichu were put to death. A third member of the noble clan, Buri-Bökë, shared their fate. He was treacherously killed by order of Chingis-Khan, who

hated him for having once in a drunken quarrel gashed with a sword the shoulder of his brother Belgutei.

Towards 1201 Jamuga became the rallying point for all the tribes and clans that refused to submit to Chingis-Khan. As both Temuchin and the Wang-Khan were working for the creation of a great nomadic empire, these clans naturally regarded both as their enemies. On the banks of the Argun[1] Jamuga-Sechen was chosen to be head of a new coalition of clans and tribes with the title of *Gur Kagan*, King of all the People. It would appear that among the followers of Jamuga democratic elements prevailed, for they had most reasons to fear the further strengthening of either Chingis-Khan or of the Wang-Khan. But aristocratic clans connected for one reason or another with Jamuga also took part in making him Gur-Kagan.

Before long hostilities began between Jamuga on the one side and Chingis and the Wang-Khan on the other. Luck was against Jamuga. His soldiers began to desert. Pursued by the Wang-Khan he had to retreat with all his *ulus* in the direction of the lower Argun.

[1] Southern (right) branch of the Upper Amur ; its upper course is the Kerulen.

Chingis-Khan now took the opportunity of attacking his kinsmen and old enemies, the Taichiuts, without much success at first. He failed to defeat the enemy, and was himself wounded in the neck, and fainted. There is a story of the exploit of his retainer and companion, Jelmë, who sucked the clotted blood out of his Khan's wound, and then crawled into the enemy's camp and stole a pail of *airan* (sour milk), to still Chingis' thirst. But the Taichiut soldiers did not prove reliable; they began to disperse, and ultimately Chingis had little difficulty in capturing the whole people and destroying some of his enemies. It was then, incidentally, that a young man of the Yesut clan, a vassal of the Taichiuts, presented himself before Chingis-Khan. His name was Jirguadai. He confessed that he had been with Jamuga and that in battle his arrow had struck Chingis-Khan's horse. "And now, Khan, if you order me to be killed you will only soil a small patch of earth, no more than the palm of a hand; but if you leave me alive, I will serve you with zeal; I will stop deep water and shatter rocks to pieces." Chingis-Khan's answer was characteristic: "When a foe attempts to slay a man he is usually silent about it and does not tell the other; you have not concealed it; you shall

be my companion." Taking him to his tent Chingis changed his name, giving him that of Jebë which means arrow, to commemorate his misdeed. It was this Jebë that afterwards became one of the most remarkable and talented of Chingis-Khan's generals. He was one of the two commanders at the Kalka,[1] where the Mongols defeated the Russians.

The power of Chingis-Khan continued to grow, and the number of clans that joined him increased. Neither did he lose the friendship of the Wang-Khan. He was able now to complete the destruction of the Tatars, thus avenging on them all his past wrongs, and securing his rear in view of eventual campaigns in Central Mongolia. Before the decisive battle with the Tatars Chingis-Khan gave the following order of the day to his soldiers : " If we are victorious, you shall not seek for booty ; when all is over it will be divided into equal shares. If the soldiers are forced to fall back to the initial positions, they shall advance again and fight with increased vigour. Who, having retreated, does not resume the advance, will be beheaded." The Tatars were routed and Chingis took all their camp. The

[1] Now Kalmius, an affluent of the Sea of Azov, in South-Eastern Ukraine.

sequel of the victory made it clear to Altan, Kuchar and the other leading aristocrats that Temuchin had indeed become Chingis-Khan, and that far from being an obedient tool in their hands, he was not going to allow anyone, however noble, to transgress his orders and disobey the discipline he had established. For no sooner had the battle begun than those noblemen began collecting the spoil of the Tatars. Chingis-Khan was immediately informed of this and ordered all the spoil to be taken away from them.

After taking advice with his kinsmen, Chingis-Khan proceeded to a terrible massacre of the Tatars, wishing to destroy to the root the old enemies of his house. The survivors were distributed between different clans and tribes, so that from that time the Tatars ceased to exist as a distinct entity. Chingis took for wives two beautiful Tatar women, Yesui and Yesugen. This brought the number of his wives to three. In accordance with nomadic custom each of them had her own special "tent" or headquarters with her own establishment.

Though the defeat of the Tatars immensely increased his power, Chingis-Khan continued to recognize the supremacy of the Wang-Khan, remaining, in a sense, the vassal of the Kereit ruler.

But the attitude of the latter grew less friendly; he entered on an agreement with Jamuga, who fanned the growing hostility of the Wang-Khan for Temuchin. The latter, he insinuated, was in secret relations with the Naimans and on the point of betraying the Kereits. "Myself," he said, "am a lark who always lives in the same place, but Temuchin is a bird of passage whose cry rings out in the skies." On various occasions the Wang-Khan refused Chingis-Khan his share in the common booty. On the way back from a successful expedition against the Naimans where Chingis had accompanied the Wang-Khan, the two Khans came up against fresh forces of the enemy that had been assembled by one of their chiefs. The Wang-Khan treacherously abandoned Chingis, marching away during the night to his grazing grounds.

The Wang-Khan's treachery resulted in no disaster for Chingis who operated a skilful retreat to his grazing-grounds. But the Wang-Khan was attacked by the Naimans who took a large booty. He was obliged to ask Chingis-Khan for help and to ask him to send his four *kuluk* (great warriors), Bogurchi, Mukali, Boroula and Chilaun. The Wang-Khan had had occasion to appreciate their

military and organizing talents and they entirely fulfilled his expectations.

In spite of many successful campaigns Temuchin had not yet thought at that time of challenging the Wang-Khan. In the eyes of the Mongols he was still no more than the lucky and skilful leader of a few aristocratic clans, that had achieved success because they had succeeded in coalescing into a well-organized whole. After all he was a parvenu. The Wang-Khan, on the other hand, was the ruler of a large, if loosely organized, state and the scion of an ancient royal dynasty; his tents displayed a certain degree of luxury; the Kin Emperor himself, the lord of the wealthy North of China, had honoured him with the title of Wang. All this impressed the simple-minded people of the steppes, placing the Wang-Khan above all the other nomadic lords of Mongolia. And Temuchin had good reasons to make full use of his improved relations with the Kereit ruler. He adopted the plan of confirming his own position and giving it additional lustre by entering into matrimonial relations with the greater ruler. To be the son-in-law (*kurgen*) of a powerful Khan had always been a title of distinction in the steppes. Chingis asked for the hand of Chaur Begi, the daughter of Wang-

Khan, for his eldest son Juchi ; offering at the same time his own daughter, Kojin, for one of Wang-Khan's grandsons, whose father, the son of the Kereit ruler, was known by the Chinese title of Sen-Kung. But the Wang-Khan rejected the proposals, and that, says the *Secret History*, " chilled the heart " of Temuchin. And indeed the refusal must have been a great disappointment for him, for the hope of becoming related to so great and noble a Khan had taken a firm grip on his aristocratic imagination. Before long he was to undergo further disappointments and new ordeals.

Altan and other of his kinsmen openly seceded from Temuchin and entered on an understanding with Jamuga ; they moved their camps nearer to the Sen-Kung, the Wang-Khan's son, who now assumed a particularly hostile attitude to Chingis. They realized that as long as Chingis was Khan they would have to be entirely obedient to his will, which was contrary to the wishes of these independent aristocrats. The Sen-Kung and his followers succeeded in persuading the Wang-Khan that Chingis was in relations with their enemies, the Naimans, and that he was preparing mischief, and the Wang-Khan, much against his will, decided to take action.

The plan of the Sen-Kung's party was to decoy Chingis-Khan into their hands by feigning to consent to his suit; when that ruse failed, they adopted the course of trying to seize him by a sudden attack. Neither did this plan materialize. Chingis-Khan was informed of it in good time by two shepherds from the enemy's camp, so that when on the following day the Wang-Khan appeared at the head of his army, the soldiers of Chingis were ready for battle. The Kereit ruler asked Jamuga, "Who are Chingis' soldiers?" Jamuga answered: "Two clans, Urut and Mangut; he has good soldiers; they do not become disorganized in a melée, and from their childhood they are accustomed to the use of spears and swords; their banners are coloured, or black; when they appear, we must beware of them." In the battle that ensued Chingis repelled all the attacks of the Wang-Khan and his allies. The Sen-Kung received an arrow wound. Nevertheless Chingis decided to withdraw and passed the night at some distance from the field of battle. At dawn, when Chingis received his soldiers, he saw that three were missing; these were his own son Ugedei, Boro-Kula and Bogurchi. Chingis said: "Ugedei, Boro-Kula and Bogurchi, the trustiest of all my men, lived together and have

died together, not wishing to part." But suddenly Bogurchi rode up, and Chingis beating his breast exclaimed to the Sky: "Oh." "A few moments later," to quote the *Secret History*, "there appeared another horseman; as he drew nearer it became apparent that there were four legs under the horse; it was Ugedei and Boro-Kula, riding the same horse. Boro-Kula's mouth was soiled with blood because he had sucked out the clotted blood from an arrow wound in Ugedei's neck. Seeing this, Chingis wept and his heart was contracted." But the forces at the disposal of Chingis-Khan were insufficient to continue the struggle. There remained nothing left for him but to continue his retreat. The army was provisioned by game killed in the course of great battues. The retreat proceeded along the Kalka[1] river. After having retreated to a certain distance and somewhat restored his forces, Chingis sent envoys to the Wang-Khan, the Sen-Kung, Jamuga, Altan and the other allies to whom they were to transmit his exhortations for peace and promises of submission. Chingis-Khan was illiterate and so were, at that time, all his followers. Messages were conveyed by word of mouth, by men possessed of good memo-

[1] Not to be confused with the river mentioned on p. 45.

ries. To make the message easier to retain and repeat word for word it was usually composed in verse, and interspersed with allegories and proverbs. Chingis-Khan's message to the Wang-Khan included the following passages: "Father! Why have you became angry with me and instilled fear in me? If there was need to reprimand me this should have been done in a peaceful way, without destroying my possessions. . . . Though small, I am worth many; though bad, I am worth those that are good. Besides, you and I, we are as the two shafts of a cart; when one is broken the ox cannot draw the cart; you and I, we are as the two wheels of a cart; if one is broken the cart cannot move; for may I not compare you with a shaft and with a wheel?" The message to Altan and Kuchar contained a reminder of the oath they had given at the time of Chingis' election, and insisted on the way he had fulfilled his duties as the lord and suzerain of steppe aristocrats: "I took many horses, herds, carts, wives and children of the people and I gave them to you. At hunts and battues I arranged things in the best way for you; the mountain game was driven in your direction."

But his enemies paid no attention to these words of peace. "I have penetrated the secret meaning

of his speeches," said the Sen-Kung, " the one true word is battle. Raise the great banner and fatten your geldings on the pastures. There is no more room for hesitation." Chingis was forced to move away to the marshy banks of lake Baljun, where he could hide himself and feel sufficiently safe from a sudden attack. Still his position was precarious and the necessity of camping among bogs and marshes only made him feel this all the more.

But again the number of Chingis-Khan's followers began to grow ; men assembled round him who considered it profitable to follow him, so firm was their belief in his destiny. Among those that came to him were Moslem merchants. The trade of all Central Asia was then in their hands and they penetrated into its furthest recesses. Intercourse with these men gave him an opportunity for widening his horizon and for learning much about the world at large, about other lands and nations. The merchants were probably attracted to Chingis by his liberality, for it was not without reason that the people said of him : " Prince Temuchin will take from the dress he wears and will give it away ; he will dismount the horse he rides and will give it away."

His brother Kasar, whose wife and children had

remained in the power of the Wang-Khan, also came to Chingis, who saw in this an opportunity not to be missed. Without any compunction, so far as we can see, he now formed a treacherous plan against the man he only yesterday called father. He was himself in heavy straits, and he knew that if the Wang-Khan was victorious he need expect no mercy. He felt that it was his duty to go on unswervingly towards his main purpose: the restoration of the greatness of the Mongol clan with himself at its head and at the head of all the steppe aristocracy. Besides, there was nothing in the ideas in which he had been brought up, or in the life he had known that could have any inhibitive influence on him. So he sent two men purporting to be messengers from Kasar to the Wang-Khan with the order to deliver the following message: "Nowhere did I see the shadow of my brother; I walked all the roads and did not find him; called for him and he did not hear me—but to-night I sleep facing the stars, with my head resting on the ground. My wife and children are in your possession, Father and Kagan! If you send me a man of confidence, I will come to you!" The Wang-Khan believed the message and sent a man of his confidence with Kasar's messengers. Chingis-Khan in the mean-

time advanced with all his army ; these messengers told him that feasting was going on at the head-quarters of the Kereit ruler and no measures of precaution were being taken. Chingis proceeded by forced marches to the Kereit camp, surrounded the Wang-Khan and attacked him. Taken unawares, the Kereits offered obstinate resistance, but were ultimately defeated. The Wang-Khan and his son the Sen-Kung fled. The former was soon killed near the Naiman borders; his son escaped into distant countries where he perished.

Thus at one stroke Chingis-Khan had succeeded in crushing the most powerful ruler in Mongolia and putting himself in his place. The common people of the Kereits were distributed by Chingis-Khan among his followers ; the nobility were admitted as his vassals or vassals of his allies. The following incident is reported, which characterizes Chingis-Khan's attitude to the vanquished, and, in general, vividly depicts nomad manners. "A Kereit, Kadak-Bagatur by name, who had fought in the battle, said to Chingis : 'It would have been unbearable for me to allow you to take and kill my lawful lord ; I fought for three days, to give the Wang-Khan time to escape as far as possible. Now if you bid me die, I will die ; if you grant me

my life, I will serve you with zeal.' Chingis said : ' One who refused to abandon his lord, and in order that the latter might win time and space, fought single-handed against me for three days, is a gallant man. Be you my companion.' " Always and everywhere, even among his enemies, Chingis upheld the aristocratic principle, the feudal lord's authority over his vassal, and the master's over his slave. He always encouraged loyalty in servants and punished with death those who betrayed their master even if the latter were Chingis' own worst enemies. A characteristic case was his behaviour towards the vassals of the Taichiut leader, Targutai-Kiriltuk (an old enemy of Chingis) who had seized their master and intended to deliver him to Chingis-Khan. At the last moment the traitors recalled the ideas of Chingis-Khan, set their master free, and going to Chingis-Khan told him the whole story : " If you had delivered him to me I should have most certainly put you to death," said Chingis. Numerous similar instances of Chingis-Khan's attitude in these matters might be quoted. The steppe aristocracy could be proud of their new Khan. He was genuinely one of them, the true spokesman of their hopes and ideals.

VI

WAR WITH THE NAIMANS. THE END OF JAMUGA

WHILE he was still under the protection of the Wang-Khan, Chingis-Khan had already come in contact with the powerful Naiman tribe whose country lay to the west of the Kereit. The Naimans were the most civilized of all the Mongol peoples, for they had been strongly influenced by Uigur civilization.[1] It is probable that they were the first to adapt the Uigur script to the Mongolian speech, and to write in Mongolian. Besides the Uigurs they were in relations with Turkestan and Jetysu. Their country was visited by Moslem merchants, who exercised a cultural influence on the upper classes of Naiman society, and through them on the whole people. Many of the Naimans were Christians of the Nestorian persuasion.

[1] The Uigurs, a nation of Turkish stock, inhabited the North-Eastern part of Chinese Turkestan (districts of Hami, Urumtsi, Turfan, Kucheng).

The Naimans could not fail to be disquieted by the rise of Chingis-Khan, especially when after the overthrow of the Kereit power he became the most powerful ruler of Central and Eastern Mongolia. So Tayan-Khan, the Naiman ruler, attempted to form an alliance with the Ongut tribe, who lived near the Great Wall of China, for the purpose of attacking Chingis-Khan from two sides. But the Onguts rejected his proposals, and informed Chingis-Khan, who at once began to prepare for a new war. He began with the organization of his army, which by now presented a very considerable force. In accordance with an immemorial usage, he divided it into thousands, hundreds and tens. Experienced leaders, personally known to the Khan, were appointed to be commanders of the thousands and hundreds. The new post of *cherbi* was instituted, to look after the supplies. A Guard corps (*keshik*) was organized that was to be the Khan's personal guard as well as a *corps d'élite*. Its organization was on a strictly aristocratic basis ; it was recruited from " young men, agile and well shaped, from the families of noyans, chiliarchs and centurions, as well as from free-men (*tarkat*)."

The Guard included a picked thousand of "braves," *bagaturs*. In battle this corps was to be

always in the front line; in time of peace it mounted guard. Chingis knew only too well how easy it was for nomads in the steppe to become the victims of an unexpected attack, which might at a single blow put an end to the most grandiose enterprise. This knowledge made him pay particular attention to the organization of the efficient protection of the Khan's headquarters (*ordu*). The institution of the aristocratic guard and the appointment of chiliarchs and centurions laid the foundations of the military organization of the steppe aristocracy. The nobles ceased to be the undisciplined heads of a disorderly militia. An iron discipline was introduced, in the guards as well as in the thousands of the line, and enforced with the same severity at his headquarters.

Chingis-Khan began the campaign against the Naimans early in the spring. This allowed him to seize the initiative, but it also implied certain risks; for the horses of nomads who remain all the year round on the grass are naturally particularly lean in the spring. Before beginning his march Chingis-Khan offered sacrifice to his banner, in which, according to Mongol ideas, resided the guardian genius of the army (*suldê*). The Naimans, commanded by Tayan-Khan and his son Kuchluk,

advanced to meet the Mongols, and were utterly defeated; Tayan-Khan lost his life, while Kuchluk, a man of considerable energy, fled into the Altai mountains.

This is how *The Secret History of the Mongols* describes the advance of Chingis-Khan's army against the Naimans, presenting in epic style himself and his paladins: "At that time Jamuga was also with the Naimans. Tayan asked: 'Who are these, that pursue our men, in the manner of wolves pursuing a flock of sheep to their very pens?' Jamuga answered: 'They are the four hounds of my Temuchin, fed on human flesh; he keeps them leashed on an iron chain; their skulls are of brass, their teeth are hewn in the rock, their tongues are like bodkins, their hearts of iron. Instead of horsewhips, they carry curved swords. They drink dew; they ride with the wind; in battle they devour human flesh. Now they have been unleashed; their spittle runs; they are full of joy. These hounds are Jebë, Kubilai, Jelmë, Subeedei.' . . . Tayan again asked Jamuga: 'Who is that behind them, like a hungry hawk, impatient to advance?' Jamuga answered: 'That is my *anda* Temuchin, clad from head to foot in iron armour; he has flown hither like a hungry vulture;

do you see him ? You used to say, that as soon as the Mongol comes he will fare like the lamb, and not even his hoofs and hide will remain. But behold ! ' "

The Naimans defeated and the whole tribe reduced to captivity, Chingis advanced against his old enemies, the forest nation of the Merkits, whose head was Toktoa. These too were routed, but their leader succeeded in escaping together with his sons and a small number of followers. It was then that Chingis took from among the Merkits his fourth wife, Kulan, the famous beauty, celebrated in Mongol poetry.

In the following year he conducted his still more distant campaign beyond the Altai, with the purpose of finally destroying his enemies, Kuchluk the Naiman and Toktoa the Merkit. In the ensuing battle they were utterly defeated. Toktoa was killed, while Kuchluk fled into Jetysu, to the Kara-Kitans who were then the masters of that country. Subeedei, one of his best generals, was sent to overtake the surviving sons of Toktoa who had also fled with the remnants of the Merkits.

These victories made Chingis-Khan master of all Northern Mongolia. All the Mongol tribes had become his subjects. There remained only Jamuga-

Sechen, but his doom was approaching. Forsaken by all, the democratic leader became the head of a band of robbers and was, ultimately, delivered to Chingis-Khan by his own men. On that occasion again Chingis did not fail to uphold the aristocratic principle that guided his life. "Is it possible," he said, "to leave alive men who have betrayed their own lord? Let them be put to death, with their sons and grandsons." Remembering that Jamuga and he had been adopted brothers—*anda*—Chingis allowed his prisoner to die without his blood being spilt. This was a mercy, for according to the Shamanist conception of the Mongols a man's soul resided in his blood.

VII

CHINGIS-KHAN EMPEROR OF ALL THE MONGOLS

"AND so, when all the generations living in felt tents became united under a single authority, in the year of the Leopard (1206) they assembled near the sources of the Onon, and raising the White Banner on Nine Legs, they conferred on Chingis the title of Kagan. Chingis-Khan then took into his hands the government of the Mongol People, and said: 'I shall utter words of grace, distributing the Thousands to those who worked with me in the making of the Khanate, and appointing noyans to command the Thousands.'" Such is the account given by the *Secret History of the Mongols* of one of the most significant moments in the life of Temuchin-Chingis-Khan.

In proclaiming Temuchin Chingis-Kagan, i.e. Emperor of the Mongol Nation (*Mongol ulus*) the "great assembly" or *kurultai* assembled by Chingis-Khan in 1206 on the Onon, to which came all his

kinsmen and companions, all the noyans and bagaturs, all the Mongol nobility, only confirmed what had been done a few years earlier by a small group of aristocrats. His long-nursed dream was at last a reality: he was the leader of his clan, and his clan was leader of all the "peoples living in felt tents." The clan Borjigin had once more revived the greatness and glory of the Mongol name, and all peoples of their race—all "the peoples living in felt tents"—would henceforward be designated as Mongols. All the noyans, bagaturs, beks and tegins, all the aristocracy—the collective vassals of the several clans—now became the vassals of the clan of Mongol and accepted its name. For the first time the united nation had a common name; and the name soon became so glorious that every nomad was proud to call himself a Mongol.

Chingis-Khan introduced a definite religious idea into the political conception of his own suzerainty and of that of his clan. A prominent part at the *Kurultai* of 1206 was played by the sorcerer and shaman Kökchu, son of Munlik, whom the Mongols viewed with superstitious reverence. Kökchu announced that the Everlasting Blue Sky favoured Chingis-Khan who was its own pre-

ordained envoy on earth (*jayagatu*) and all his clan. Chingis himself readily accepted the view. "The Sky has ordered me to govern all peoples," he said. "With the protection and help of the Everlasting Sky I defeated the Kereits and attained to supreme rank." The White Banner on Nine Legs was now inhabited by the guardian genius (*suldë*) of Chingis' clan. The *suldë* would protect his troops and lead them to victory; he would conquer all peoples, for the Everlasting Blue Sky had ordained so. Chingis was Khan by the power of the Eternal Sky (*möngke tengri-yinkuchun-dur*). To this day the Mongols preserve and reverence the White Banner of the *Suldê*, which is the same, they believe, that led the armies of Chingis-Khan from victory to victory. They believe that the soul of the great Emperor has itself entered the *suldê* banner, and that he has himself become the guardian-genius of his glorious clan, which to this day governs the Mongols.[1]

Considering his religious and social views, Chingis-Khan could not but found the constitution of his Empire on a strictly aristocratic basis. His conception of it was the average steppe aristocrat's

[1] Written before the establishment of the Republic of Mongolia in 1924. The statement would now be true only of Inner or Chinese Mongolia.

conception of the constitution of his particular clan, only on an immensely enlarged scale. In the same way as an aristocratic family or clan is the head of a tribe, so, in the system of Chingis, the "golden clan" (*altan uruk*), with its vassals and followers, is the head of all the Mongol tribes, of all the "generations living in felt tents," of all peoples, of all the world. At the head of the imperial clan is the Emperor who is the head of his own clan, and of the aristocracy that has joined him, much rather than the head of the people, or of the nation. Chingis-Khan never conceived of himself as a popular leader. He was and remained the leader of an aristocratic clan, that had unified all the Mongol aristocracy. His messages, speeches, decrees and statutes are never addressed to the people, but always to the princes, noyans and bagaturs.

In the same year 1206 Chingis-Khan completed the organization of his Guard, which of course was based on strictly aristocratic principles. The end he had in view was not only to have a reliable personal guard for his movable headquarters and a picked corps of soldiers, but an institution that would, under his personal guidance and constant control, become a nursery of trusty lieutenants.

He knew each man personally and could give him tasks in accordance with his individual aptitudes.

All the guardsmen (*keshikten*) were to be of noble blood. "Now that the Sky has ordered me to govern all nations, let there be recruited from the myriads, thousands and hundreds, ten thousand men, archers and others, to be my personal guard (*keshik*). These men, who will be attached to my person, must be chosen from among the sons of nobles or of free men (*tarkat*)[1] and must be agile, well-built and hardy. . . . Each chiliarch, centurion or decurion who opposes this order, will be considered guilty and punished." The Guard was given special privileges and honorific distinctions. "A guardsman of my bodyguard (*keshik*)," it is laid down by Chingis, "is superior to an external (i.e. 'of the line') chiliarch; his family are superior to external centurions and decurions. If an external chiliarch regards himself as the equal of a *keshiktu* of my bodyguard, engages in a dispute or fight with him, he shall be punished." All the guardsmen were in the personal cognizance of the Emperor, who himself settled their suits. "The commanders of the bodyguard may not without my explicit permission punish

[1] See page 71.

their subordinates on their own account. If a misdemeanour is committed by a guardsman it must be at once reported to me, and then who deserves being beheaded, will be beheaded; who deserves being beaten, will be beaten."

Addressing his old guardsmen Chingis-Khan said: "You are the body-guardsmen of the night watch (*kebteut*) for the peace of my body and soul; you mounted guard all round my tent, on rainy and snowy nights, as well as on the clear nights of alarms and of battles with the enemy. . . . Owing to you I have attained to supreme rank. . . . My descendants shall regard these body-guardsmen as a monument of myself, and take great care of them; they shall not excite their resentment, and shall regard them as good genii."

Chingis-Khan's choice of his lieutenants and the way he appointed them to their several posts prove his extraordinary skill and knowledge of men. It is here that his genius is most clearly apparent. His demands on his subjects were severe, but he was always most attentive to the needs of those he knew personally. It was his desire that at all times, even in distant expeditions, their destiny should be in none but his own hands. This, according to Chingis-Khan, was the natural conse-

quence of the privileges of the aristocracy. When, for instance, he was sending out Subeedei-Bagatur with his army, to the pursuit of the sons of Toktoa the Merkit, Chingis-Khan instructed him thus: "If any one disobeys you, if he is a man I know personally, bring him to be tried by myself; if he is not, execute him on the spot."

All the Mongols now formed one organized army. They were all divided into Hundreds and into Thousands which were united into groups of two, three, or five thousands and into larger units—army corps—myriads (*tumen*). The individual clans and tribes were grouped or divided for that purpose, forming units which could muster the requisite number of soldiers at the shortest notice. At the head of each unit Chingis-Khan placed men he knew personally and trusted, and who were as a rule kinsmen of the men under their command. This policy preserved the clan constitution from decomposition, while giving it at the same time a regular, if rudimentary, military skeleton. In the place of men who had become chiefs by chance were placed commanders of the same aristocratic origin, but bound by their service to the Khan and by military discipline. In accordance with immemorial Mongol usage the army was divided into

three sections: the Centre (*köl*), at the head of which was placed Naya; the Left, or Eastern, Wing (*jun-gar*), commanded by Mukali; and the Right, or Western, Wing (*barun-gar*) commanded by Bogurchi. "I exempt you from punishment for nine crimes," said Chingis-Khan to Bogurchi, when he appointed him commander of the Right Wing; "be my myriarch and rule all the West country as far as the Golden Mountains (Altai)." "Be the myriarch of the Left Wing," he said on the same occasion to Mukali, "and command all the Eastern side as far as the Karaun mountains; your descendants will inherit your dignity."

It was Chingis-Khan's desire to have generals chosen personally by himself, and with whose individual characteristics he was familiar, in every part of his Empire; and he was always anxious to retain personal control of their actions. "The Noyans (commanders) of myriads, thousands and hundreds," he proclaims, "who assemble in the beginning and in the end of the year to listen to our desires and then return to their commands, are fit to command them; but the state of those who remain in their tents and do not hear our thoughts is as of a stone that falls into a great water, or of an arrow sent into a growth of rushes. . . . Such men

are not fit to be commanders." Seeing Subeedei off to an expedition he said to him: "Though you will be far from me, it will be the same as if you were near. On your way the Sky will for certain preserve and help you."

To sum up, the Mongol aristocracy commanded the Army, served in the Guard and occupied various posts at the Khan's headquarters or tents (of which there were four, according to the number of his chief wives) and at the headquarters of his nearest relatives. By the side of this aristocracy of birth (whose topmost layer was formed by the commanders—noyan) there stood the class of free men, *tarkat*, who for divers services had been exempted from taxes and given the right of "not surrendering the spoil they took in battle or the game they took at the chase, but of keeping it for themselves." Some of the *tarkat* became noyans. Vassals and subjects were given to those who possessed none of their own, if their services were such as to merit such a reward. Thus, to Jebë and Subeedei Chingis-Khan said: "The peoples you have brought together, you shall govern them in your quality of chiliarchs." Cases are also reported such as the following: "Chingis ordered the shepherd Degei to assemble the homeless people and be

their chiliarch. After the administrative distribution of the people, the men governed by the carpenter Guchugur turned out to be too few. To complete their number Chingis ordered each commander to set apart several men from each thousand, and Guchugur, together with Mulkalku of the Jadarat clan, were made the chiliarchs of these."

Besides carrying through this military reform, and organizing the steppe aristocracy, Chingis-Khan paid much attention to the administration of his headquarters, the organization of hunts and in general to the provisioning of the army, as well as to the organization of civil government. The latter was probably a harder task for him than the military reforms, for both he and his Mongols were at a very primitive degree of civilization. The Kagan never learned to read or write, neither did he ever acquire any other language besides his native Mongolian. It would appear that the very existence of writing was revealed to him only after his victory over the Naimans, when the Mongols captured Tatatunga, an Uigur, who had been in the service of Tayan-Khan as Keeper of the Seal. Tatatunga became the first teacher of the Mongols. Chingis-Khan himself made no attempt to master the alphabet, but with his usual perspicacity he at

once appreciated its great importance, above all for the needs of the Empire he was intent on building. So he ordered that reading and writing should be taught to his kinsmen and companions. His adopted brother, Shigi-Kutaku, made particularly rapid progress, and altogether appears to have been the aptest of all the Mongols for the reception of Uigur culture. For that reason Chingis made him Chief Judge, giving him on that occasion the following characteristic instruction: "Now that I have assured my control over all nations, you shall be my ears and my eyes. Let no one go counter to what you say. I commission you to hold judgment and punishment in cases of theft and fraud. . . . You shall sentence to death those that deserve death and mete out punishment to those who deserve it. After settling a case you shall record it on a black tablet, that others may not change your rulings in the future." In his choice of the Chief Judge Chingis-Khan gave proof of the same wonderful knowledge of men with which he chose his generals, for Shigi-Kutaku fulfilled his duties with exemplary virtue, and his judgments became models for future judges. It is on record, that he attached no importance to evidence produced under the stimulus of fear.

Eminently practical in all he did, Chingis-Khan made use of the newly-introduced alphabet for the purpose of committing to writing his *Sayings* (*Bilik*) and his *Institutions* (*Jasak*, *Yasak*, or *Yasa*), which were a codification of the common law of the Mongols. Neither the *Bilik* nor the *Jasak* were compiled at one time: they grew up by degrees and are the work of Chingis-Khan's whole life. He attached a primary importance to the making of the *Jasak*. "If the rulers, who come after the present one (i.e. himself), and the grandees, bagaturs and noyans, who surround them do not in all things obey the *Jasak*, the work of government will be jeopardized and discontinued. Then will they be glad to find a second Chingis-Khan, but they will find none." And again: "If the descendants, who will be born and take my place, five hundred, or a thousand, or ten thousand years hence, preserve these laws and do not change the *Jasak* of Chingis-Khan . . . they will be granted great prosperity by the Sky." "The Great Yasa" was thus made obligatory on all, including the head of the Empire, the Kagan himself. Chingis-Khan's idea was to promulgate an unchangeable law for all time, that would be obeyed by his descendants to come, as it was by

his contemporaries. He drew this immutable law neither from the institutions of the more civilized nations with which he came in contact (and which he never failed to appreciate at their full value), nor from the revelations of a supreme spirit (though these, too, he recognized) but from the ancient traditions, usages and ideas of his clan and of his nation. He was convinced that by raising these usages, this common law, to the dignity of public—as it were statutory—law he had established eternal norms, good for all time ; for he did not conceive it to be possible that the Mongols could ever evolve any other constitution than that which they had and which had now been sanctioned by himself, and by the will of the Everlasting Blue Sky. But everything changes and all things pass. The " Great Yasa " has ceased to be law, and the modern Mongols have lost all recollection of it. Even its text has not been preserved by them. It only survives in a few miserable fragments, from which we can with difficulty reconstruct the whole. Nevertheless it played an immense rôle in the life of the Empire founded by Chingis-Khan and profoundly influenced every aspect of the life of the Mongols, as well as that of the nations they conquered.

The *Jasak* was applied with ruthless severity, and before long an exemplary order reigned throughout the Empire, murder, robbery, lying and adultery becoming exceedingly rare. The *Jasak* gave a final sanction to the aristocratic constitution. On the common people, and on the slaves (whose number was continuously swollen by victorious wars) it weighed heavily as a powerful instrument of oppression.

The *Bilik*, or Sayings, of Chingis-Khan, was a collection of his utterances on various occasions, compiled by degrees. Only that was included in it which the Kagan desired to be preserved. Much, of course, of what they heard from him may have survived in the memory of his followers and companions. This was facilitated by the fact that Chingis-Khan, like all capable Mongols of his time, had the gift of giving his thoughts metrical form, a usage inherited from the immemorial past and which made it possible for an illiterate people to preserve the maxims of their fathers. In later times the Mongols attached the greatest importance to the sayings of the founder of their Empire. They formed part of the education of every ruler and administrator. But like the *Jasak*, the *Bilik* has come down to us in a fragmentary state.

Some of the sayings have been preserved by the Mongols, others have survived in the works of Chinese and Moslem writers.

To complete the organization of the military and civil administration Chingis-Khan instituted the post of *beki*, who was to be the State's chief priest, vested with power and officially recognized. As the reader will recall, the title of *beki* was known from antiquity and was borne more particularly by the leaders of forest clans or tribes. Such leaders added the secular power of a prince to the spiritual authority of the shaman, which rested on his relations with the clan's ancestor and with its protecting spirits. Chingis now established the post of State Shaman. The first *beki* to be appointed was Usun, an old man who was the eldest member of the Baarin clan, the senior branch of the descendants of the legendary Bodunchar. For this reason Usun could be regarded as having particular ties with the Ancestor and was capable of representing him. " Usun," Chingis-Khan said to him, " You are the eldest descendant of Baarin, you must be the *beki* ; in your quality of *beki* you shall ride a white horse, dress in white clothes, and in every company take the first place ; it shall be

your duty to find out which year and which moon is auspicious."

Meanwhile in a series of campaigns in which for the most part Chingis-Khan took no personal part the limits of the Empire were extended beyond the borders of Mongolia proper. In 1207 his eldest son Juchi with the troops of the Right Wing was sent against the "peoples of the forest"; the Oirats and the Qirghiz. The latter were a people of non-Mongol stock who inhabited the Upper Yenissei valley[1], a fertile country where, at that time, much grain was sown, and exported by Moslem and Uigur merchants. Besides that, the land of the "peoples of the forest" was rich in sables and other peltries; falcons also came from there. Juchi accomplished his task with complete success, securing the Empire from all danger of unexpected attacks on that side and placing under its control vital trade routes. The submission of the Uigurs was spontaneous. Their ruler, who bore the title of *idikut*, sent an embassy to the Mongol Khan, and afterwards came personally to pay homage to his new suzerain. Chingis-Khan gave him for wife his daughter Alchaltun.

In 1211 the northern part of Jetysu was con-

[1] The modern district of Minusinsk.

quered by Kubilai-Nayan. The authority of the Mongol Emperor, the master of a nomadic Empire, thus began to extend to lands of ancient civilization where a large part of the population lived a sedentary life.

In the meantime Chingis-Khan, as it were, finished off the constitution of his nomadic Empire, by carving out apanages from among the conquered peoples for his mother, brothers and sons. On this, as on other occasions, Chingis followed the old nomadic usages. He knew that by giving parts of his empire to his kinsmen he in no wise compromised the unity of the Empire, which was solidly held together by the authority of the iron Kagan and by his immutable *Jasak*. In giving apanages to his relatives Chingis only once more confirmed his adherence to the old principles of the steppe aristocracy, and emphasized the fact that his Empire was for his clan. "Of my sons," he said to Juchi, on the latter's return from the campaign, "you are the eldest; now you have for the first time gone to war, and without fatiguing your troops have conquered all the peoples that live in the woods; these people do I give to you."

Chingis-Khan was at that time a little over fifty. He enjoyed excellent health, and confidently

looked into the future, conscious of the protection and help of the Everlasting Sky, whose desire it was to give all the world to him and to his glorious clan.

VIII

CONFLICT WITH KÖKCHU, THE SHAMAN

CHINGIS-KHAN was not only religious, but superstitious. The primitive religion of the Mongols was a favourable ground for superstition. The desire, or, we may even say, the need to know the will of the Everlasting Blue Sky and of the guardian spirits was a constant stimulus for communing with shamans, sorcerers and divinators. But, here as in other things, Chingis-Khan preserved a certain sense of measure and freedom of mind. This must have been no light task for him, for he had to strive against the superstitious terrors that had been instilled in him by all his surroundings from his earliest age. The incident which is the subject of the present chapter is of particular significance in this connection, for after these occurrences, though Chingis-Khan continued to consult shamans and soothsayers, he always kept within reasonable limits. If he saw that the

answer of a divinator, or even his own superstitious sentiment, was opposed to common sense, or to the designs that had become his very life-blood, he refused to follow it. He never submitted to one-sided impulses, and had an iron will capable of holding in rein even his own superstitious prejudices which he shared with all his people.

Munlik, the man whom Yesugei-Bagatur, on his deathbed, had entrusted with the care of his family, had seven sons. One of them became famous as a shaman. His name was Kökchu, but he was also known by that of Teb-Tengri (*Tengri* being Mongolian for Sky, Heaven). He won the confidence of Chingis-Khan, who seems to have believed quite sincerely that Kökchu communed with the spirits, could ascend the Sky, and had powerful protectors among the genii. He seems to have played a certain part in the raising of Chingis-Khan to the Empire, and he had not the slightest desire of remaining in the background. Belonging as he did to a family closely related to Chingis-Khan's, he had every right to regard himself as one of the aristocracy.

Kökchu's ambition was to utilize to the fullest extent his quality of shaman and his faculty of communing with the spirits, and to use his influence

on Chingis-Khan for intervening in state affairs. It is quite probable that he nursed even more ambitious plans, for his influence with the aristocracy was great. Once after a quarrel with Chingis' brother, the athlete Kasar, Teb-Tengri came to the Emperor and said: "The Spirit has revealed to me a holy command of the Everlasting Sky: first Temuchin will rule over the nations, and after him Kasar. If you do not eliminate Kasar your cause is in jeopardy." Teb-Tengri had calculated right, and his words had the desired effect, for Chingis was intensely jealous of power. The same night Chingis-Khan went to Kasar's abode, seized him, and depriving him of cap and belt (as a sign of loss of liberty) began to cross-examine him. But at that moment of a sudden there came in their old mother, Oyelun-Yeke, who had been informed by her attendants. She unbound Kasar, and restored to him his cap and belt. She squatted down, and uncovering her breast said with indignation: "Do you see this? These are the breasts both of you sucked. What crime has Kasar committed that you should wish to destroy your own flesh? When you were an infant, you sucked out one of my breasts; Kachiun and Otchigin together could not suck out the other. Only Kasar

could suck out both, and relieve me of my milk. The soul of Temuchin has genius, but Kasar has strength and skill in archery. Each time the peoples rose against you, he suppressed them with his bow and arrows; now that all enemies have been destroyed Kasar is no longer of use to you." Chingis felt ashamed and went out. Nevertheless he deprived Kasar of some of his men.

In spite of the failure of his attempt to make mischief between the brothers, which would have placed Chingis-Khan in a complicated and humiliating situation, Teb-Tengri continued to come every day to the Khan and give him every kind of instruction and directions. The importance and influence of the shaman grew apace. He had a following among the aristocracy, who viewed him with superstitious awe, while common people began to transfer their allegiance from other masters to him. Supported by his brothers, the shaman grew ever more insolent towards the family of Chingis-Khan, and at length went so far as to insult the latter's youngest brother. People began to murmur. Chingis' wife, Bortë, said to him: "What kind of order is this? If these men attempt to destroy your brothers, who are majestic like cedars, while you are alive, the people, which is like

a flock of birds or grass under the wind, will refuse to submit to your sons when you are no more."

This time Chingis-Khan realized that the thing could no longer be tolerated. Suppressing his superstitious terror of the shaman, he said to Otchigin, the brother that had been insulted by Kökchu: "When Teb-Tengri comes here to-day, you may do to him what you like."

When a little later Teb-Tengri came to the Khan's presence accompanied by his father, Munlik, and by his brothers, Temuge-Otchigin seized him by the collar. Chingis told them to go out of his presence if they wanted to wrestle. They went out holding each other fast. As soon as they were out of doors three strong men that had been placed in readiness seized Teb-Tengri and broke his spine. Otchigin came back to the tent saying that Teb-Tengri did not want to wrestle, but had lain down and would not get up. Munlik, the shaman's father, understood at once what was the matter. He broke into tears and said to Chingis: "Kagan! I became your follower before your ascent began, and have remained so to this day."

In order to quiet public opinion which was excited by the murder of the famous shaman, Chingis made the following notable statement: "Teb-Tengri

beat my brothers and slandered them iniquitously. That is why the Sky withdrew its love from him, and with it his life and his body."

Chingis-Khan mentioned the body of the shaman, because a rumour spread among the superstitious Mongols that on the third day after his death the corpse of Teb-Tengri had escaped through the smoke-hole of the tent that had been placed over it. In his statement Chingis-Khan pointed out clearly that the sky favoured and continued favouring himself and his clan, and was prepared to punish anyone who attempted to rise against the Khan of the Mongols, or his kin ; moreover he admitted that a shaman was capable of " iniquitous slander." But these words, however characteristic they may be, were intended for the masses, for the superstitious adepts of the shaman. At any rate what Chingis said to Munlik, Teb-Tengri's father, was quite different and revealed his real mind : " You failed to teach your own sons. He wished to be equal to me, that is why I undid him. If I could have foreseen such qualities in you and yours, I would have undone all of you long ago." But, as always, on this occasion Chingis-Khan gave proof of his self-control, and refrained from unnecessary cruelty. "If after giving one's word in the

morning," he said to Munlik, " one were to change it by nightfall, or after giving it in the evening withdraw it on the morrow, one would be brought to shame by the judgment of men ; I have previously promised to free you from death. So let there be an end of the matter."

With the death of Kökchu, there went the last man in Mongolia that could attempt to be the equal of Chingis, to oppose or to disobey him. Now all bowed to the iron will of the iron Emperor, who had travelled the hard way from a half-starved existence in a forsaken tent of the Onon, to the imperial headquarters of an organized Empire.

IX

CAMPAIGNS AGAINST TANGUT AND CHINA

NOW that he had completed the conquest of Mongolia and united under his rule all "the generations that lived in felt tents," Chingis-Khan stood face to face with the great civilized kingdoms that lay immediately to the south of the Mongolian plateaux—China and Tangut (Si-Hia). China's wealth—the fruit of her soil and of her civilization—had always been an object of desire for the Northern nomads, who were always ready to raid her, or, failing that, to trade with her. At frequent intervals they would break into China, capturing her cities, and occupying her provinces. A dynasty of nomad origin would be founded; then with almost equal rapidity it would disappear, sucked in by the human ocean of China and merged in Chinese civilization. The process was repeated many times in the course of Chinese history, only the details varying. China was a magnet that

attracted the nomads who produced little of their own, and loved plunder. As soon as a nomadic nation of the northern steppes acquired some power, it would turn its attention to China, and a succession of inroads and incursions would follow. Now that Chingis-Khan was the head of the united nomads of the North, he found himself in this oft-repeated situation. Like his predecessors, he was drawn southwards, after booty and glory.

At that time the lands that are usually regarded as forming China were divided between three Empires, roughly equal in size: the North-West, together with the adjoining parts of the Great Gobi, belonged to the Tanguts,[1] whose Empire bore the name of Si-Hia, or Kashin; what is now Manchuria, together with the North-Eastern provinces of China proper, belonged to the Jurjens, a nation of Manchu-Tunguz stock, whose Empire was called by the name of their dynasty, Kin or Golden; the South of China formed an independent Empire, ruled by the national Chinese dynasty of the Sung.

With his usual circumspection, Chingis-Khan began his Chinese campaigns by invading the Tangut Empire. As the Kereits, the Naimans and other Mongol tribes had long been in constant

[1] The Tanguts were closely related to the Thibetans.

relations with the Tanguts, he had at his disposal the most exact information about their country. The Uigurs, especially their merchants who visited Tangut and were familiar with the country and its conditions, were also of great use in this respect. The conquest of the Naimans had made Chingis-Khan an immediate neighbour of the Tangut Empire.

In 1209 he advanced into Tangut territory, defeated their army and penetrated as far as the city of Junsin (Ling-Chow),[1] the residence of the Tangut ruler. There peace was concluded, one of the conditions being the payment of an annual tribute by the Tangut; and Chingis-Khan returned to his pastures with an immense booty.

Some of our sources would have it that there had been a campaign against the Tanguts before the conquest of the Naimans, and another in 1207. But it is probable that Chingis had taken no personal part in these, and did not even take much interest in them. As for the campaign of 1209 it not only brought in a rich booty, but weakened the Si-Hia Empire to such an extent that for some time at least Chingis-Khan could feel safe on that side. Besides, the campaign offered him the opportunity

[1] In Kan-Su, on the Hwang-Ho.

of testing his army against an enemy holding fortified positions.

The next task, of a more grandiose nature, that stood before Chingis-Khan was the Kin war, and to this he devoted himself with his usual attentiveness and steadiness. Besides the motive that compelled every powerful ruler of the Northern nomads to invade China, Chingis-Khan had grievances of his own against the Kin dynasty. Anxious to protect their northern frontier, the Kins had always done their best to keep in check the free peoples of the steppe. It was their invariable policy to foment discord among the Nomads and to incite one tribe against another. In the twelfth century, partly by their own means and partly with the aid of the Tatars, the Kins had put an end to the greatness of the Mongol clan. Two prominent leaders of the latter had been cruelly put to death in the Kin capital. Now that Chingis Khan had restored the Mongol clan to even greater power and placed it at the head of a great nomad Empire, it was his duty to avenge the wrongs of his ancestors. The Kins were his worst enemies, destroyers and oppressors of his clansmen. He must take cruel vengeance on them. His clan-consciousness and sense of duty to his clan pointed

that way. Such an attitude had considerable advantages, too, in the eyes of his kinsmen and of all the Mongol aristocracy. It would transform a predatory incursion into China into an "idealistic" enterprise. These "idealistic" considerations must have greatly inspired Chingis-Khan's soldiers, who were conscious of going not merely on an expedition of plunder and rapine, but of meting out just punishment to their Emperor's enemies, to the enemies of the glorious clan, that had now united all the "generations that lived in felt tents."

But this did not satisfy Chingis-Khan. He attempted to add to this a kind of religious consecration. The Everlasting Blue Sky must help him, because it favoured his clan, and had chosen him for that reason. The Sky would lead his army to avenge the wrongs of his clansmen, for these wrongs were its own. So before starting for the campaign he shut himself up alone in his tent, and remained there for three days, the surrounding soldiers and people exclaiming in the meanwhile: "Tengri! Tengri!" (Sky! Sky!) On the fourth day he came out of his tent and announced that the Everlasting Sky granted him victory, and that now they were to go and punish the Kins.

It is also recorded that Chingis-Khan ascended a hill, took off his cap, hung his belt round his neck, and addressing the Everlasting Blue Sky prayed that it might support his intention of avenging the wrongs of his ancestors and clansmen and the heinous murder of Anbagai-Khan.

During the preparations for the campaign, Chingis-Khan had the opportunity of obtaining exact information of the state of affairs in the Kin Empire, of the disposition of its troops, and the location of their fortresses and munition stores. It was supplied by refugees, who had escaped from the Kin country, for reasons of national hostility or other reasons. The Ongut Mongols who lived by the Great Wall, at the very threshold of China, also proved useful informants. Still more important were the reports of the Moslem merchants whose high cultural level and many-sided experience placed them in a particularly favourable situation. All the trade between China and Central Asia was in their hands. They were well acquainted with all the routes, knew the state of every district they traded with, and had numerous acquaintances and connections in the most various quarters. In Mongolia and in China they were about the only people whose knowledge of the world was not

limited to one country, but ranged over all the lands from Persia to China. Chingis-Khan had long become acquainted with this class of men, and learned to appreciate their importance for his ends. In his Instructions he refers to the merchants as examples of men who know their business. "In the same way as our merchants who convey clothes of brocade and other good things in the hope of profit become exceedingly experienced in those goods and fabrics, so must the noyans of my army teach boys to send arrows and to ride horses, and exercise them in these occupations, and make them as bold and as brave as the merchants are experienced in the arts they possess." On the other hand the merchants had occasion to become convinced that Chingis-Khan was not only a just and generous ruler, but that their interests were identical with his.

They saw that in the measure that his government grew firmer and more stable, trade connections between distant countries became easier and the profit of the trade increased; while he regarded them as indispensable men, who could procure for his Empire the commodities produced by civilized countries—which were in constant demand, especially since the steppe aristocracy had become the

ruling class of a great Empire. Mutual understanding cemented the alliance of Chingis-Khan and the Mongol aristocracy, shamanists though they continued to be, with the Moslem capitalists, and made of the latter the faithful supporters of the Mongol cause.

Though by the beginning of the thirteenth century the Kin Empire was already on the decline, it was by no means a colossus on feet of shale. Only recently it had given proof of its vitality by repelling the attacks of its enemies. Chingis-Khan knew that he was attacking a powerful enemy, that had at its disposal numerous fortified cities, well provisioned and armed, and surrounded by thick and tall walls.

He started on the campaign, leaving the banks of the Kerulen in the spring of 1211, accompanied by his four sons Juchi, Chagatai, Ugedei and Tului, and by all his best generals. To ensure his rear and the safety of his home camps, a small detachment was left behind in Mongolia. The Kins knew of the coming invasion of their territory and took measures for its defence ; they may even have contemplated an offensive into the Mongolian Gobi, but as events were to prove, their preparations were inadequate. Their army, though much

more numerous, proved no match for Chingis-Khan's. Above all, the Kin army lacked unity, for it consisted of men of three different races—Chinese, Jurjens and K'itans, the latter being the descendants of the nomad people who ruled Northern China before the Kins.[1]

Soon after crossing the frontier Chingis-Khan defeated the Kin general Ta-shi, and the victory made him master of lands lying inside the Great Wall and belonging to the Kins. His general, Jebë-Noyan, sent ahead with his army corps, in a short time took the fortresses covering Tai-t'ung-fu,[2] the western capital of the Kins. The capital itself was soon after that taken by Chingis-Khan in person, as well as the cities of Süen-tê-fu and Fu-chow.[3] At the same time detached columns were sent by Chingis-Khan commanded by his three elder sons for the conquest of the cities and districts of Northern Shansi. The young princes acquitted themselves of this task with complete success. Twice again Chingis-Khan, commanding his army in person, defeated the Kins. The fortress

[1] The Liao dynasty of K'itan origin ruled China from 916 to 1125. Khitai, the Turki form of the name K'itan, is responsible for the name of Cathay, and is still the Russian name of China (*Kitay*).

[2] In Northern Shan-Si.

[3] In Northern Chih-Li.

that protected the famous mountain pass of Tsue-yuen-kwan, over which lies the road leading from Mongolia into the plain of Peking, was occupied by Jebë-Noyan. The Mongols appeared under the walls of the Middle Capital of the Kins, the city now known as Peiping (Peking). Detachments sent out from the main forces took a number of towns north of Peking as far as the sea, and, after winter had already set in, captured the herds of horses of the Kin Emperors.

In 1212 the K'itans of Southern Manchuria rose against the Kins; their leader recognized himself the vassal of Chingis-Khan and obtained help from him. The main forces of the Mongols carried on their operations in Chih-li, inflicting several defeats on the numerous hosts of the Kins. Chingis-Khan also organized army manœuvres, making his army simulate advance and retreat. After that he divided his army into three parts: one commanded by the Princes Juchi, Chagatai and Ugedei, was sent into Shan-Si; another eastwards into the country adjoining the Yellow Sea; the third was led by Chingis-Khan himself into Shan-Tung.

All these armies operated with complete success, and within a few months nearly all the Kin lands

north of the Hwang-Ho had fallen into their hands. Only some dozen well-fortified towns, including the Middle Capital, Peking, escaped that fate. The prestige of Chingis-Khan and his Mongols became so great that not only K'itans, but Jurjens—chiefs and officials—began to go over to him. They realized that the invasion was no ordinary raid of semi-savage nomads, and his army no disordered mob of steppe horsemen, and began to view him as the future lord of China, destined to depose the Kins and found a new dynasty. Chingis-Khan lost no time in utilizing this attitude to recruit Chinese units. They were used to operate under the control of Mongol generals, but Chinese officers were placed in command of them.

In the beginning of 1214 the Mongol armies, laden with an immense booty, united under the walls of Peking, north of the city. But no attack was attempted against the Kin capital; Chingis realized the difficulty of taking a strongly fortified city, provided with everything necessary, and garrisoned by the best troops of the Empire. He did not allow himself to be lured by the splendid prospects of capturing the famous capital of the "Golden" Empire together with its Emperor. He saw all the risk of the undertaking; it was of

more immediate importance to secure the transportation of the immense booty taken by the Mongols to Mongolia.

So he offered peace to the Kins on condition that the Kin Emperor gave his daughter with a rich dowry to the Mongol Khan. The Kins acceded to the demand, the Emperor giving Chingis-Khan an adopted daughter, the youngest daughter of his predecessor, with a dowry consisting of much gold and silver, of five hundred boys, five hundred girls, and three thousand horses. After that Chingis-Khan began his withdrawal.

But hostilities recommenced before long, earlier probably than the Kins, who hoped to profit by the armistice to restore the fortresses destroyed by the Mongols and to erect new ones, would have wished. The occasion for the resumption of hostilities was the following. A diplomatic mission having been sent by Chingis to the Sungs of Southern China with an offer of alliance, the Kins interposed a vigorous resistance to this. At the same time there came the news that the Kin Emperor had abandoned Peking, leaving there his heir, and moved his residence to the town of Pien (the modern K'ai-feng, capital of Ho-nan), more distant from the frontier. During this migration of the

Imperial court, part of the accompanying troops, consisting of K'itan units, mutinied, marched back to Peking and sent to Chingis-Khan the expression of their loyalty and an appeal for help. Chingis-Khan at once sent his army against the Kins. Jebë-Noyan once again took the Tsue-yuen-kwan pass, Mukali invaded Southern Manchuria, while other generals, together with the Jurjens and K'itans that had gone over to the Mongols, approached the Middle Capital, Peking, and laid siege to it. The relief armies sent by the Kin Emperor were defeated by the Mongols, and Peking surrendered in the summer of 1215.

Chingis-Khan at that time was in the country beyond the Great Wall, whither he had withdrawn to escape the summer heat, and whence he could control all the operations against the enemy. On receiving the news of the fall of Peking he sent Shigi-Kutaku and two other of his courtiers to make an estimate of the booty taken, and especially to receive the Imperial Treasure of the Kins. The Kin official in charge of the Treasure of his Emperor offered rich presents to the envoys of the Khan, but Shigi-Kutaku rejected the presents with these words: "Formerly, the gold and fabrics of the Middle Capital belonged to the Kin Emperor; now

they are the property of Chingis-Kagan ; how can they be touched without his permission ? " But the two deputies of Shigi-Kutaku accepted the presents. On being informed of the incident Chingis-Khan severely rebuked the two that had accepted the presents, and rewarded Shigi-Kutaku, saying to him : " You shall be my eyes and ears." Chingis was always jealous of what he regarded as his just rights of property, and highly valued behaviour like that of Shigi-Kutaku.

After the capture of Peking Chingis sent a detachment of his army to raid Pien, the Southern Capital of the Kins, whither their Emperor had retired. His aim does not seem to have been to put an end to the Kins by taking that city. He fully realized that this was a matter for the future, and would demand years of struggle. The detachment penetrated into Ho-Nan province, reached the Southern Capital, and took the important fortress of T'ung-kwan. The Kin court had lost all courage even before that event and made proposals of peace to Chingis. The answer returned by the latter plainly showed that he was no longer going to be satisfied by carrying away with him a rich booty, but desired to acquire a firm standing in the country he had conquered. He demanded that the Kin

Emperor should abandon all the provinces north of the Hwang-Ho, abdicate the title of Emperor, and be henceforward known by the modest appellation of King of Ho-Nan. The Kins found it impossible to accede to these demands and hostilities continued. They were carried on in various parts of China under the control of Chingis-Khan's generals, particularly of Mukali, who was made Viceroy of the newly-conquered lands, retaining at the same time the post of Commander of the Left Wing of the Mongol army, while Chingis-Khan, in the spring of 1216, returned to his tents on the Kerulen.

X

CHINGIS-KHAN IN CHINA. MEETING WITH YELIU-CH'UTS'AI

THE vast scale on which the operations were conducted in the Kin brought to full light the military genius of Chingis-Khan. They revealed him not merely as an experienced and skilful tactician who had all the qualities necessary for the conduct of an army in battle, but as a remarkable strategist capable of co-ordinating the operations of armies on an extensive theatre of war. His extraordinary knowledge of men was once again revealed in the skill with which he made use of the enemy's generals that went over to him, detailing to each of them tasks adequate to his capacities. His genius for organization found expression in the rapid formation of units and whole army corps recruited from Chinese, Jurjens and K'itans. The discipline of the Mongol army was extended to these new formations, and this greatly

increased their value, enabling the Mongol command to use the purely Mongol units with greater economy.

Chingis-Khan has been accused of horrid cruelties committed in the course of the Chinese campaign, such as the massacre of thousands of prisoners, and the slaughtering of the population of whole cities and provinces. But the more careful and circumspect historians are now convinced that all these tales of the cruelty of Chingis and his Mongols stand in no relation to the historic truth. His bloodthirstiness is contradicted among other things by the fact that multitudes of K'itans, Jurjens and Chinese, common soldiers, as well as generals and high officials, went over to his side, were well received and found it possible to accept service under him. This attitude toward the people of an enemy country did not on occasion prevent Chingis-Khan from ordering a massacre in some Chinese town that had offered particularly obstinate resistance, or behaved treacherously to the Mongols, if he regarded this as a necessity dictated by the laws of war. But he was never wantonly cruel or bloodthirsty.

Among the men introduced to Chingis-Khan after the taking of Peking was Yeliu Ch'uts'ai, a

descendant of the former K'itan dynasty. Quite Chinese in his culture and ideas, Yeliu-Ch'uts'ai was not only a well-educated man but the author of delicate and exquisite verse. Chingis-Khan liked his appearance, his tall stature, long beard and sonorous voice, and said to him : " The house of K'itan and the House of Kin were ever enemies. I have avenged you." Yeliu-Ch'uts'ai answered : " My grandfather, my father and myself were all subjects and servants of the Kins. I should be a despicable liar if I told you I had hostile feelings for my lord and father." This reply could not fail to please Chingis-Khan, whose views on the fidelity of vassals and servants to their masters, even when these were his enemies, have already been defined. He retained Yeliu-Ch'uts'ai at his court. An additional reason for his doing so was that the latter was famed as a skilful astrologer. Chingis saw in him a man whose knowledge might be of use to his Empire and to himself. This was typical of Chingis' attitude towards the higher civilizations. While he remained an illiterate man of the steppes and never acquired any idea of science or of the higher forms of art, he always treated in the best way all learned men, being anxious to use their superior knowledge for his own more primitive

ends. In his relations with foreigners he always gave proof of his astonishing gift of understanding a man from the first and making the right choice. So it was with Yeliu-Ch'uts'ai; admitted to court for his astrological learning, he ultimately became the outstanding statesman of the Mongol Empire.

XI

FROM THE KIN CAMPAIGN TO THE INVASION OF THE WEST

CHINGIS-KHAN returned from the campaign against the Kins laden with an immense booty consisting mainly of various gold and silver articles, fabrics, especially silk, and beasts of burden; slaves, as well as every description of craftsman and artist, were equally accounted part of the booty. All this innumerable wealth did not go, of course, to Chingis alone, but he retained the better part of it. The rest went to his companions, the myriarchs, chiliarchs and centurions; neither did the common soldiers go without their share. From this time onward luxury, fine stuffs, crowds of trained Chinese domestics, artisans and craftsmen of every description became necessary attributes in the tents of Chingis-Khan. The magnificence of his tents and chariots struck the Chinese travellers who visited his headquarters; they affirmed

that such splendour had not been seen even at the court of the ancient Hiung-Nu.[1] But Chingis never entertained the idea of introducing a stiff court etiquette. In the daily routine of his camp he preserved the old steppe customs, without borrowing anything from the Chinese. A curious account of his reception of the Sung ambassador has been preserved by the Chinese General Mong-hung. "On one occasion the emperor sent for the ambassador, and when the latter came said to him: We had a game of ball to-day, why did not you come? The other answered that he had not been invited and so durst not come. The Emperor retorted: From the moment of your arrival in my Empire you have become a member of my household; you must come each time we make merry or have a feast, a game of ball or a chase; why wait for an invitation? He broke into laughter, imposed on the ambassador a penalty of six glasses [of wine], and let him go only towards nightfall when the latter had become quite drunk. . . . When the ambassador was taking leave the Emperor instructed his convoy to retain him in every good town for several days, to give him the

[1] The nomad people that inhabited Mongolia in the later centuries B.C.; probably identical with the Huns of European history.

best wine, tea and food, and to cause the best music-boys to play the flute for him, and the most beautiful girls to play the lute."

Speaking generally Chingis-Khan was not seduced by the blandishments of Chinese civilization. Though his long sojourn in China during the Kin campaigns gave him a first-hand acquaintance with her civilization, he continued to prefer and encourage Uigur culture, which he regarded as better adapted to the needs of the Mongols. And indeed of all the civilized nations with whom the Mongols were in touch in the twelfth century the Uigurs were the nearest to them in every respect; they still retained many nomadic customs and ideas, which made them particularly akin to the Mongols. Christianity, Manichæism, Buddhism and Islam were all represented among the Uigurs, but there were no religious conflicts or fanaticism among them. National considerations always dominated over religious. As for Chingis, he continued to view all religions with equal favour, but remained himself a good Shamanist, true to the traditions of his people. Neither did his campaign in China change his views as to the nature of the State and its constitution. He continued to uphold the old aristocratic system and to care only for the

domination of his clan, supported as it was by the aristocracy. The growth of his empire obliged him to take into his service a considerable number of men of the civilized nations that had become his subjects, and to appoint them to posts that could not very well have been occupied by Mongols. But he hoped that before long, when the sons of the loyal nobles who were receiving an Uigur education would have grown up and become men, the number of such posts would diminish. He was firmly convinced that the principles that underlay the foundation of his Empire would remain immutable and that a splendid future awaited his descendants, if only they would unswervingly adhere to the Institutions of his *Jasak*; he did not regard Uigur education as capable of destroying the aristocratic clan regime, the faith in the Everlasting Blue Sky, in the shamans and their spirits, or any other of the customs and beliefs of the steppe.

Back from China, Chingis directed his attention to the West, where there still survived his old enemies, Kuchluk the Naiman and the sons of Toktoa the Merkit. The latter had succeeded in bringing together some forces in the most inaccessible parts of the Altai. Subeedei-Bagatur was dispatched against them, and successfully anni-

hilated these last remnants of Chingis' worst enemies. One of the sons of Toktoa was taken prisoner and brought before the Prince Juchi, whom he charmed by his skill in archery. Juchi begged his father to spare the skilful marksman. But Chingis-Khan gave a stern reply, saying that he had conquered many lands and peoples for his clan, and could afford to do without the scion of an enemy tribe. He ordered the son of Toktoa to be put to death.

Jebë-Noyan was sent against Kuchluk, the son of the Naiman ruler Tayang-Khan. After the destruction of the Naimans Kuchluk with a small band of followers had fled into Jetysu, where by utilizing the Moslem movement against the Gurkhan (the Emperor of the Kara-Khitai nation,[1] which had trekked from China and founded an empire in the West in the first half of the twelfth century), he succeeded in establishing his power in Eastern Turkestan. Before long Kuchluk turned out to be himself an even worse enemy of the Moslems than the Gurkhan, especially after his wife, a Karakhitai noblewoman, persuaded him to abandon Christianity and adopt Buddhism, which latter religion the Moslems classified as idolatrous.

[1] A branch of the K'itans.

Sent with two army corps (i.e. 20,000 men) against Kuchluk in 1218, Jebë-Noyan made extraordinarily clever use of the Moslems' grievances against that ruler. The first thing he did on entering the latter's territory was to proclaim that everyone was free to follow what faith he liked, and that the civil population would not be in any way molested. In this he showed himself a worthy disciple of his master. The inhabitants soon saw that his words were no mere decoy. Owing to the marvellous discipline that reigned in his army, all happened exactly as Jebë had promised. Revolts against Kuchluk broke out on all sides, and the Mongols were received as liberators. Kuchluk made an attempt to stem the Mongol advance in Jetysu, but was defeated and fled into Kashgaria, where at last he was overtaken and put to death by the soldiers of Jebë-Noyan.

That remarkable captain and statesman did not merely contribute to the glory of Chingis-Khan's name by destroying his Emperor's enemy and conquering extensive territories for him, he created for him and his Mongols a special halo in the eyes of all Moslems. For indeed a small detachment of the Mongol army had easily destroyed the enemy of Islam, without causing any annoyance to the

civil population, while the most powerful Moslem ruler of the time, the Khwarezmshah Muhammed, had been powerless to achieve anything, and had been obliged to lay waste his own territory on the right bank of the Sir, that they might not become the prey of Kuchluk.

This popularity among the Moslems played a considerable rôle in Chingis-Khan's subsequent conflict with the Khwarezmshah. Neither did the events that hastened that conflict and which were the immediate occasion of the Mongol invasion contribute to the glory of that potentate.

XII

THE INVASION OF THE WEST: THE PRELIMINARIES

THE taking of Peking and the defeat of the Kins made the name of Chingis-Khan famous and aroused in the Khwarezmshah, who himself dreamed of conquering the riches of China, a keen interest in the person of the Mongol Emperor. The Khwarezmshahs were a dynasty of Turkish origin who by putting to intelligent use the natural features of their original possessions in the Amu delta, had gradually attained to a dominant position in the whole Eastern part of the Moslem world. Chingis-Khan's contemporary, the Khwarezmshah Ala-ud-din Muhammed, was master of Turkestan, Afghanistan and Persia. His empire was immense, but disorganized. It lacked cohesion and his subjects did not conceive of it as their country. Though they were all Moslems the religious unity did not contribute to the stability of the empire. Muhammed had on many occasions

offended the religious susceptibilities of the Believers, and succeeded in making the Moslem clergy his enemy. The military class was equally hostile, and the common people were by no means particularly attached to him.

On learning of the Mongol successes in China, the Khwarezmshah had sent an embassy to Chingis-Khan, with instructions to verify the rumours that were being spread about the Mongol conqueror and to collect reliable information about his forces. The embassy reached Chingis-Khan's headquarters after the fall of Peking and was very well received by him. The Mongol Emperor was glad of an opportunity for establishing trade relations with the civilized countries of the Moslem East, which would allow the Mongol nomads, who produced so little, to find a new source of supply for the commodities they needed. Thanks to his old friends—the Moslem merchants—Chingis-Khan was well informed of the Khwarezmshah's empire and estimated at their right value the advantages to be derived from regular trade relations with it. These advantages were equally well realized by the Moslem traders. They were by now firmly convinced that their interests, as capitalists, coincided completely with those of Chingis-Khan, who,

though a heathen, was unquestionably a tolerant, liberal and powerful ruler.

Chingis-Khan's message to the Khwarezmshah was to the effect that he recognized the latter as the ruler of the West, just as he himself was the ruler of the East; that he would be glad to enter on relations of mutual friendship; and that merchants should be allowed free passage between the two countries. Taking advantage of the fact that the possessions of the two Emperors had become contiguous, some merchants from the Khwarezmshah's possessions now equipped a caravan which happily reached the headquarters of Chingis-Khan. The merchants were given a hospitable and honourable reception. But the strangers displayed no knowledge of his character and raised his wrath by setting too high a price on their goods. They soon realized that the articles they had brought with them were no novelty to the Mongols, and appreciated the justice and magnanimity of the Mongol Emperor.

In reply to the Khwarezmshah's embassy, Chingis-Khan sent his ambassadors together with a trading caravan. The ambassadors as well as the traders were Moslems, and natives of Khwarezm, Bokhara, and other provinces belonging to Muham-

med. The envoys carried with them rich gifts for the Khwarezmshah and proposals to assure the safety of trade relations between the two countries. The embassy and the caravans reached the possessions of the Khwarezmshah in 1216. But while Muhammed was receiving the former the latter was looted at Otrar[1] and all the merchants massacred by order of his governor. Thus did the men sent by Chingis-Khan become the victims of the cupidity and suspiciousness of the Khwarezmshah. Muhammed may not have actually given the order for the Otrar massacre, but after the event he took the side of the governor and refused to extradite him. He even insulted Chingis-Khan by putting to death the ambassador sent to demand the governor's extradition and cutting the beards of all his staff.

War became inevitable. Chingis-Khan, who had begun by showing his usual moderation and hoped at first to settle the matter peacefully, felt profoundly insulted by the Khwarezmshah's barbarous action. All the more as according to Mongol ideas the person of an ambassador is sacrosanct. It is reported that on hearing of the Otrar massacre Chingis-Khan shed tears of indignation, and accord-

[1] The ruins of Otrar lie somewhat to the north of Tashkent.

ing to his custom, addressed the Everlasting Blue Sky, to which he always recurred in every difficult juncture of his life. Ascending a hill he took off his cap, hung his belt round his neck and prayed to Sky to help him to avenge the insult.

After Jebë-Noyan had brought to a successful ending the war with Kuchluk, Chingis devoted himself entirely to the preparations for the campaign that was to destroy so many kingdoms, and play such a rôle in the history of the world. He summoned a *kurultai*, to which came all the members of his family, his generals and all the Mongol aristocracy. The *kurultai* was not assembled that Chingis might receive the approval of his kinsmen and of the nobility for his plans, but to enable him to organize a great enterprise in the best way, and personally to instruct the leaders in the coming campaign. In general, it would be wrong to regard a Mongol *kurultai* as the equivalent of a European parliament, or of the assembly of a Greek city-state. The power of a Mongol Khan, especially of such a one as Chingis, was in the strict sense unlimited.

The preparations for the campaign in the West were conducted with particular thoroughness. Chingis-Khan apparently over-estimated the mili-

tary strength of the Khwarezmshah. This was probably due to his owing all his information to Moslem merchants who naturally represented Muhammed as more powerful than he really was. But caution—especially caution in the conduct of war—always remained an outstanding characteristic of Chingis-Khan.

Before leaving for the war Chingis appointed his youngest brother to be his deputy in Mongolia; Mukali with the troops of the Left Wing remained in China, where he went on with the conquest of that country. Kulan, his fourth wife, was to accompany the Emperor; so were the four princes and all his principal companions, including Yeliu-Chu'ts'ai. All his available forces were to take part in the campaign, and they were to be swelled by contingents sent by his vassals. A demand for auxiliary troops was also addressed to the Tangut ruler, against whom another victorious campaign had been conducted as recently as 1218. "You have promised to be my right hand. Now the people of Sartagul (this was the Mongolian name for Khwarezm) have murdered my ambassadors and I go to demand satisfaction of them. You shall be my right hand," such was the message Chingis-Khan's ambassador transmitted to the

Tangut ruler. Before that potentate had time to answer the ambassador, his courtier Asha-Ganbo said: "If your forces are not enough, you need not be Emperor." The Tangut ruler agreed with his courtier's remark and refused to send an auxiliary army. Informed of this Chingis said: "How dared Asha-Ganbo utter those words? It would be the easiest thing for me to send my army against them at once. However, in accordance with my plan, I will not fight with them now, but if the Sky helps me and preserves me, I will march against them on my return from Sartagul."

Chingis-Khan had every right to speak of his plans, for before his departure he had drawn up a detailed and thorough plan of the coming campaign, having studied in detail the theatre of the future operations, mainly through the reports of the Moslem traders. He was equally well informed of the political situation in the enemy country, and was consequently in a position to make skilful use of the discontent that reigned in the Khwarezm-shah's possessions.

The summer of 1219 was passed by Chingis-Khan with his main forces on the Irtysh. In the autumn he advanced south and united with the armies of his vassals at Kayalyk. Before the actual opera-

tions began the army was occupied in organizing large chases, which served for the supply of provisions, as well as in manœuvres, and in feeding the horses.

The whole army assembled by Chingis-Khan against the Khwarezmshah can hardly have counted more than 200,000 men. The Khwarezmshah had at his disposal much larger forces, but the quality of his troops was greatly inferior to Chingis-Khan's. The Khwarezmian army lacked racial unity and was ill disciplined; Muhammed had no confidence in his generals and was afraid of bringing together large armies under one command. He had no captain that could effectively command large masses of soldiers. Many of his men showed themselves capable of heroic action at the head of small detachments, but none, not even his gifted and active son, Jalal-ud-din, was capable of commanding vast armies. In the Mongol army, on the other hand, there reigned an iron discipline, the thousands and myriads were commanded by experienced, often highly talented, captains, and the whole army was led by a man whom without exaggeration we may call a military genius.

The Khwarezmshah had not the nerve to meet

the enemy in the open field. He placed large garrisons in the several cities of Turkestan, while himself withdrew into the interior to attempt a levée en masse. But he could not even hope to kindle among the Moslems a religious feeling against the heathen aggressors. The immediate cause of the invasion was universally known; it was a matter of common knowledge that the great majority of the victims of the Otrar massacre were Moslems. Neither could the fact be concealed that a general of Chingis-Khan had easily destroyed the persecutor of Islam, and become the liberator of the Moslems of Eastern Turkestan.

XIII

OPERATIONS IN TURKESTAN, AFGHANISTAN AND PERSIA

THE famous war began in the autumn of 1219 when Chingis-Khan advanced to Otrar, and laid siege to it. The besieging force consisted of several army corps (myriads, *tumen*); another group, under Juchi, was sent in the direction of the lower Sir[1] and a small detachment into the upper valley of that river. Chingis-Khan himself, with his youngest son Tului, advanced with the main forces against Bokhara. An important official of Otrar escaped to the besieging Mongols, supplying them with the most detailed information of the state of affairs in the Khwarezmshah's empire. The fortress of Zernuk and the city of Nur surrendered to the Mongols without any resistance; the inhabitants were consequently allowed to retain their lives and possessions. The rare disci-

[1] The Sir, or Sir-Daria, is the Jaxartes of the Ancients.

pline of his army permitted Chingis-Khan to traverse these towns without any hold-up. The Mongols only razed the fortifications and recruited working columns for siege work; while the inhabitants of Nur were made to pay a contribution.

In the beginning of 1220 Chingis-Khan besieged Bokhara. The garrison attempted to leave the town and effect a retreat through the lines of the besiegers; but only very few succeeded in doing so; the majority fell in battle. After that the inhabitants decided to surrender; only a small body shut itself up in the citadel and continued to defy the Mongols. After twelve days' siege the citadel was taken and its defenders massacred. On entering into Bokhara, Chingis demanded lists of the rich merchants, officials and notables, and on the strength of them, imposed contributions; all the inhabitants were made to leave the city with nothing but a single suit of clothes. The deserted city was delivered by Chingis-Khan to his soldiers; in the course of the sack it was destroyed by fire.

From Bokhara, Chingis-Khan marched on Samarkand, bringing with him hosts of prisoners, whom he used for siege works. In the mean time after a prolonged siege and a desperate defence of

the citadel, Otrar had been taken. The governor responsible for the massacre of Chingis' envoys was made prisoner. He was brought before the Emperor who satisfied his thirst for vengeance by having him cruelly put to death. The besieging army joined the main forces of Chingis before Samarkand.

On the fifth day of the siege after an unsuccessful sortie, the garrison and inhabitants of Samarkand decided to surrender. The Mongols entered the city, razed its fortifications, drove the citizens out and sacked their houses. This time only the Moslem clergy and persons under their protection were spared. The citadel was taken by storm. The garrison, which consisted of Turkish soldiers, was cruelly dealt with; they were all put to death, their captain at their head. This was done in order to terrorize the Turkish adherents of the Khwarezmshah and to deprive them of any desire of fighting the Mongols.

While he was besieging Samarkand, Chingis received the report that the detachments sent along the Amu[1] in both directions had also been successful, and that the Khwarezmshah had fled into the interior of his possessions in the hope of raising

[1] The Amu is the Oxus of the Ancients.

new forces and organizing afresh the defensive. Immediately three *tumens*, under Jebë-Noyan, Subeedei-Bagatur and Toguchar-Bagatur, were detailed with instructions to cross the Amu and, while avoiding doing any harm to the civil population, to pursue the Khwarezmshah until they had captured him. They were to disorganize all resistance in front of them, and penetrate as far as possible into the enemy's rear, after which Chingis-Khan himself would advance with the main forces so that the enemy might be taken on both sides.

But the Khwarezmshah failed to organize any kind of resistance, and only succeeded in evading his pursuers. He took refuge on a small island in the Caspian; and there, before long, he died; while Jebë and Subeedei effected a truly incredible offensive over the Caucasus into the South Russian steppe where they defeated the Russian princes on the Kalka; returning after that to Chingis-Khan's headquarters by way of the Kipchak Steppe.[1]

The summer of 1220 was passed by Chingis-Khan in the environs of Nesef, at the present site of the town of Karshi. Those parts are admirably fitted for the summer pastures of nomads. Chingis

[1] Now Qazaqstan.

profited by his stay there to restore his horses and to afford some rest to his soldiers. The recently conquered country was already beginning to recover from the consequences of the war. The Mongol Emperor took measures for the restoration of normal life. Governors, in most cases chosen from among the Moslems, were appointed to the conquered towns ; only in the towns where Mongol garrisons were posted a Mongol commander was appointed by the side of the native governor.

In the autumn Chingis-Khan advanced to Tarmiz,[1] which was taken by storm after a stubborn defence. During the short siege of that town good services were rendered by catapults which silenced the armaments of the enemy and allowed the besiegers to advance their storming columns to the foot of the walls. These catapults had been built for Chingis by Moslem engineers, for Chingis knew very well how to utilize for his ends all the possibilities of the civilized nations conquered by him, without allowing the foreigners he took into his service to become anything more than his obedient tools.

The winter of 1220-21 was passed on the banks of the Amu, which are well suited for winter pastures,

[1] Now Termez on the Amu (on the Soviet-Afghanistan frontier.)

while a strong detachment, under the three princes and Bogurchi-Noyan, was given for its objective Khwarezm and its capital Gurganj. That district was at the time in a flourishing condition and might have become the starting point for a counter-offensive. It was administered by Turkan-Katun, the energetic mother of the Khwarezmshah. But this time she preferred to fly, as soon as she heard of the abandonment of the Amu line by her son. She was overtaken by the Mongols in Persia and made prisoner. That cruel and ambitious woman was subsequently taken away by Chingis-Khan to Mongolia, where she lived for a long time, outliving the great conqueror. Gurganj was taken after a prolonged siege, after which in the spring of 1221 Chagatai and Ugedei joined their father, who was then besieging Talkan.[1]

After crossing the Amu, in the spring of 1221, Chingis-Khan occupied Balkh and advanced to Talkan (Talikhan), sending out detachments of his army for special tasks ; thus the prince Tului was sent into Khorassan.

Muhammed's son Jelal-ud-din had succeeded, after his retreat from Khwarezm, in evading his Mongol pursuers, and even in defeating one of their

[1] In Afghan Turkestan.

columns. He now came to Ghazni, in Afghanistan, and there began to organize forces for a counter-offensive. He was a brave and active man, and had no desire of imitating his father. He plunged into the struggle with Chingis-Khan without giving much thought to the high qualities of the Mongol army and of its leader, or to the doubtful reliability of his own forces. His decision was prompted by personal courage, possibly by a sense of duty, but above all by an adventurous temperament. Shigi-Kutaku, of whom we have heard already in the course of this history, was detailed against Jelal-ud-din, but was severely defeated by the latter at Perwan,[1] and obliged to return to Chingis-Khan's headquarters with the remains of his corps. This was the only serious reverse of the Mongols in the whole war. Chingis-Khan, on this occasion, showed his greatness of mind, and received the news of the defeat with complete calmness. "Shigi-Kutaku," he remarked, "has been accustomed to be invariably victorious, and has never yet experienced fortune's cruelty; now that he has he will be more cautious." Chingis, who himself had more than once experienced her "cruelty," was fond of reminding his generals of

[1] Near Ghazni.

the fickleness of fortune, and valued above all in others a quality which he himself possessed in an eminent degree—caution. Thus for instance when he heard the news of Jebë-Noyan's successes against Kuchluk, he sent him a message telling him not to be proud of his victories, for it was pride that had been the undoing of the Kereit Wang-Khan and of the Naiman Tayang-Khan. Chingis liked Shigi-Kutaku for his lucid mind, his openness to new things, and his bravery, of which he had given proof from his earliest years. For once, in the middle of the winter, when Chingis-Khan's camp was on the march through deep snow, there passed at no great distance from the camp a flock of deer. Shigi-Kutaku, who was then fifteen, caught sight of them and asked permission of the camp-commander to go in pursuit of the beasts, who could not run very fast on account of the deep snow. In the evening, when the camp stopped for the night, the absence of Shigi-Kutaku was noticed by Chingis, who when he heard of the reason became angry with the camp commander for having allowed a boy to leave the camp column in such weather. But at that same moment Shigi-Kutaku returned, announcing that of the thirty head of deer he had killed twenty-seven. Their bodies were found

afterwards in the snow. Chingis-Khan liked the boy's bold action, and he became even more fond of him.

Having established the extent of Shigi-Kutaku's reverse, Chingis-Khan began taking measures to counteract its effects. Jelal-ud-din's only way of putting his victory to good use was to kill cruelly his Mongol prisoners. He was even unable to put an end to the quarrels of his generals or to prevent the racial jealousies of his heterogeneous army from flaring up. Once more he showed himself no more than a bold adventurer, not a real captain. Talkan by this time had fallen into the hands of the Mongols, and Chingis-Khan was free to advance with the bulk of his forces against Jelal-ud-din. He passed by the field of battle at Perwan, and after surveying it reprimanded Shigi-Kutaku for his unhappy choice of ground. Jelal-ud-din retreated before Chingis-Khan, who had to follow him as far as the Indus. It was on the banks of that river that the decisive battle was fought in the autumn of 1221. Chingis-Khan commanded the Mongol army in person, and Jelal-ud-din, who had failed to effect a passage of the river, or even to transfer his family and his treasure to the other side, was utterly defeated. Neither his own bravery nor the

courage of his followers was of any avail. The Moslem army was squashed by an attack of the Mongol bodyguard of Bagaturs, whom Chingis-Khan introduced at the decisive moment. Surrounded on three sides by the Mongol cavalry, Jelal-ud-din jumped with his horse into the Indus, and gained the opposite shore, abandoning his wives and children to the victors. We are told that Chingis-Khan appreciated the audacious action of his enemy, and remarked to his sons that they must be ready to imitate this Moslem warrior.

As the battle of the Indus was the only one in the course of the whole war in which the Moslems met Chingis-Khan himself in the open field, Mongol tradition has made of Jelal-ud-din the principal of all Chingis-Khan's enemies. They have forgotten all about the Khwarezmshah Muhammed whose rôle was so inglorious; but when they do homage to the banner which of old led them to such glorious victories, the Mongols of to-day recall Jelal-ud-din and offer thanks to their guardian spirit for his defeat.

In the meantime the prince Tului had brilliantly and rapidly accomplished the task detailed to him of conquering the three principal cities of Khorassan —Merv, Nishapur and Herat—and Chingis-Khan

decided to turn home. His first plan had been to return by way of India, the Himalayas and Tibet, but circumstances were materializing against it. The mountain passes were covered with snow; the divinators, including the famous Yeliu-Ch'uts'ai, advised him to refrain from entering India, and Chingis-Khan always lent them a willing ear; at last there came news of the revolt of the Tanguts. The summer of 1222 was spent instead in the cool country at the foot of the Hindu Kush.

The campaign on the Indus and return march through Northern Afghanistan, still studded with unreduced mountain fortresses, may be regarded as one of the most remarkable achievements of the great conqueror. For indeed, in spite of the greatest difficulties imposed by local conditions, the Mongol army, guided by its great leader, did not once find itself in jeopardy.

The spring of 1222 was marked by the visit of the famous Taoist monk, Ch'ang-Ch'un, who came from China to Chingis-Khan's headquarters. The latter had long heard of the hermit's pious life, and as early as 1219 he had invited him, in the hope, it would seem, of obtaining from him "the medicine of everlasting life." He had been told that the followers of the Chinese sage Lao-Tse, the

Taoists, were occupied in the discovery of the "philosophic stone" and were very versed in magic. But in reality, Ch'ang-Ch'un, philosopher and poet, belonged to that school of Taoism which looked for the Tao ("philosophic stone") in the spiritual world, and rejected the material alchemy that occupied the other schools.

Throughout his long and tedious journey the Chinese hermit was by order of the Kagan received with honour. At Samarkand he made a long break in his journey, and it was there that a messenger came to him from Chingis-Khan with the following message: "Holy man! you have come from the land of the Rising Sun, suffering great hardships in traversing mountains and valleys and undergoing extreme fatigue. I am now on my way back and impatient to hear you interpret the Tao. Be not lazy to come out and meet me."

So Ch'ang-Ch'un started for the Emperor's camp which was then south of the Hindu Kush and before long was able to present himself to Chingis-Khan. The dread conqueror received the Taoist monk gracefully and greeted him with these words: "Other courts have invited you, but you have rejected their offers; and now you have come here over a distance of ten thousand *li*; this pleases me

exceedingly." He asked Ch'ang-Ch'un to be seated and ordered refreshments to be brought; then he addressed the monk: "Holy man! you have come from far away; what medicine for everlasting life do you possess that you might give me?" On being told that "there are means of preserving one's life, but no medicine of immortality," Chingis-Khan in no way expressed any disappointment or discontent; but on the contrary, praised the Chinese sage for his sincerity and candour. A day was fixed for Ch'ang-Ch'un to expound his doctrine, but it had to be postponed on account of military affairs; for there were still many enemy detachments in the mountains.

Ch'ang-Ch'un was allowed to return to Samarkand, and visited Chingis-Khan once more in the autumn of 1222 when the Emperor was already on his way back to Mongolia, and for some time the philosopher accompanied the Mongol headquarters. On the way the Emperor was very attentive to the philosopher, invited him "every day to come to dinner" and sent him wine, melons and other refreshments. Three times did Chingis-Khan attend the talks of the Chinese sage, receiving him on these occasions in a specially prepared tent where there were no female attendants. The

Khan ordered Taishi-Akhai (a Kara-Khitai, who had been governor of Samarkand) to repeat to him in Mongolian the words of the Master. These words were exceedingly agreeable, and on the nineteenth of the month, on a clear night, Chingis of his own accord once more invited the sage; the Master expounded to him the teaching. The Khan was very pleased. On the twenty-third he again invited him to his tent with the same signs of esteem; and listened to the Master with evident pleasure, ordering those present to take down his words; besides, he ordered them to be put down in Chinese script so that they might not be forgotten. He said to those present: "Shen-Sien has thrice explained to me how to preserve life; I have committed his words to the innermost of my heart; they must not be made public to the outer world."

The Mongol Emperor was deeply interested in his talks with the Chinese philosopher, whom he saw several times, asking him various questions, as for instance about the nature of thunder, and always paid the greatest attention to what Ch'ang-Ch'un said. On one occasion Chingis-Khan assembled his princes, generals and courtiers and addressed them thus: "The Chinese revere Shen-Sien as you do the Sky; I am now more than

ever convinced that he is indeed a heavenly man." He gave an account of the philosopher's talks, and then went on: "What he said to me was inspired by the Sky. So let each of you write it down in his heart."

In the winter of 1222 Chingis camped by Samarkand. By the end of January (1223) he was already on the right side of the Sir. In March he camped in the steppe by the river Chirchik.[1] Here, near the Eastern Mountains, while chasing a boar, he fell from his horse, and narrowly escaped being killed by the beast. Ch'ang-Ch'un took the opportunity to persuade the Emperor not to hunt so much now that he was so advanced in age. "A fall from a horse," he said, "is an indication from the Sky; that the boar did not dare go further is a sign of the Sky's protection."—"I understood that myself," replied Chingis-Khan; "your advice is very good; we Mongols become accustomed to shoot from the saddle from our earliest years, and cannot get rid of the habit. However, I have laid your words in my heart."

Soon after that Ch'ang-Ch'un asked permission to return home and took leave for ever of the great Mongol Emperor, who in the middle of the cares

[1] The river of Tashkent.

of war and of the noisy life of the camp had been so marvellously able to appreciate the philosopher.

In the spring of 1223 Chingis-Khan was joined on the banks of the Sir by his sons Chagatai and Ugedei, who had wintered by the mouth of the Zerafshan, passing their time in falconry. On the plain of Kulan-bashi a grand wild-ass hunt was organized, the animals being driven there from the Kipchak steppes by Juchi who after a long absence now came to visit his father, driving in front of him, besides the wild asses, a present of twenty thousand white horses.

Advancing eastwards Chingis-Khan spent the summer of 1224 on the Irtysh and did not reach his camping grounds in Mongolia till the following year. At the border of the former Naiman territory he was met by the princes, Kubilai and Hulagu, the sons of his youngest son Tului, the former of whom was to become great Kagan and Emperor of China, the latter, sovereign of Persia.

The little princes were taken out for the first time to a hunt. According to Mongol custom the middle finger of the hand of a boy going to his first hunt was smeared with meat and grease; Chingis personally performed the rite on his grandsons. The three younger sons of Chingis-Khan

returned with him ; Juchi, the eldest, remained in the Kipchak steppe.

Thus ended that campaign which played such an important rôle in the history of Asia and of the world, for it became the starting point of the Mongol domination in the Moslem world.

Chingis-Khan returned home, without having completed the conquest of the Khwarezmshah's dominions. But in Turkestan the Mongol power had been firmly established. A new administration was introduced, and the country was rapidly recovering from the war.

XIV

LAST CAMPAIGN IN TANGUT, AND DEATH OF CHINGIS-KHAN

CHINGIS-KHAN passed the winter of 1225-26 and the following summer at his headquarters on the Tola river,[1] where in former days the tent of his then suzerain, the Wang-Khan, had stood. The Emperor was now at the height of his glory. He was the head of an immense Empire, organized and obedient to his will, and of a loyal army, renowned for many victories; he was surrounded by trusty companions who had for many years worked to build up his Empire. They were not servile domestics or flattering courtiers, but reliable and qualified executors of the tasks he gave them. He could repeat to them the words he had once addressed to Bogurchi-Noyan: "You and Mukali, you have helped me and made me do that which it was right to do, rebuking me and staying my hand

[1] Tributary of the Orkhon, itself a tributary of the Selenga.

from that which was wrong; thanks to such behaviour of yours have I attained to high rank." His eldest son Juchi alone gave him occasion for trouble. Juchi was inclined to stand aloof from his father and from the Empire. His ambition was to carve out for himself a kingdom of his own which would include part of the recently conquered lands. During the war with the Khwarezmshah, Juchi showed his disapproval of the policy of his father and of his more obedient brothers. After the war, taking advantage of the remoteness of his apanage from his father's residence, he began to show signs of open disobedience. But Juchi seems to have been the only cloud to darken the peaceful evening of Chingis-Khan's life.

There remained the task of punishing the King of Tangut, who had refused to send an auxiliary force. At the time of his departure for the West, Chingis-Khan had promised to punish the Tanguts, and the time had come to honour the promise. In 1226 he assembled all his forces against the Tanguts. It was not, however, the thirst of vengeance alone that impelled him to war with Tangut, for there were other good reasons for the conquest of that country.

After the withdrawal of Chingis-Khan from China

the Kins had succeeded in reoccupying a large part of their territory, and Mukali, the Mongol Viceroy, was engaged in a prolonged struggle with them. Chingis-Khan realized that geographical factors made it difficult if not impossible to deal them the deathblow as long as the Mongol power was not established in Tangut, whence it was easiest to attack the Kin capital. He considered the Tangut war so important that in spite of his advanced age he did not rely on any of his generals but assumed the command of the army in person. This decision shows to what an extent he was still in possession of his moral and physical forces.

The campaign began in the autumn of 1226. His wife Yesui and the princes accompanied him. The beginning of the campaign was successful. But in the winter, at a hunt, Chingis' horse was frightened by one of the wild horses that are still found in those parts, and threw off the aged horseman. Chingis felt so ill that the princes and elder generals took counsel what to do. One of the generals said: "The Tanguts are a sedentary people, who live in towns, and cannot trek away. We will now return home, and when the Kagan is better, we will come here again." The meeting adhered to this view, so typical of the nomad mind.

But when the words were reported to Chingis-Khan, he did not approve of them. "If we go, the Tanguts will certainly think that I was afraid of them. I will be cured here. We will begin by sending to them a messenger; and we shall see what answer they give us." So the following message was sent to the King of Tangut: "You began by promising to be my right hand, but when I went out against the Moslem, you refused to follow me, and added insult to disobedience. Now, after having conquered the Moslems I demand satisfaction of you." The answer of the Tangut ruler was couched in injurious terms, which raised the wrath of Chingis-Khan. "Is it possible," he exclaimed, "for us to go away? I will die, but bring him to answer; I swear by the Everlasting Sky." These words were to prove prophetic: he destroyed his enemy, but died in the course of the campaign.

As in the preceding campaigns, Chingis did not only command his main forces at battles and sieges, but conducted the operations over the whole theatre of war, directing the several corps to those spots and against those groups of the enemy which he considered to be most important; the Tanguts offered obstinate resistance; but their cities fell one by one into the hands of the Mongols, and

their armies suffered defeat after defeat from Chingis and his generals. After taking Ling-Chow, the army laid siege to Ning-Hia,[1] the Tangut capital. Chingis himself passed the summer of 1227 in the province of Ts'ing-shuei-sien, by the river Si-Kiang, not far from the town of Ts'ing-Chow.

There, in the month of August, 1227, death came for the great emperor. He was seventy-two, and he had only recently received the news of the death of his eldest son, Juchi. He was conscious of the approach of death, and had time to give his last instructions. Of the Princes his favourite Tului was alone present. To him and to the other generals present Chingis-Khan disclosed his plan of campaign against the Kins, and gave orders that when the Tangut capital surrendered the king with all his nearest followers should be put to death; and that his own death should be kept secret until that had happened. "He passed away from the world of corruption and bequeathed the throne of Empire to a glorious clan," says Rashid-u'd-din.

The body of Chingis-Khan was carried away to Mongolia, to his permanent headquarters, where

[1] Both these cities are on the Hwang-Ho, in the province of Kansu.

he was mourned by the sons and wives and by all the noyans. After that the body was interred on the mount Burkan-Kaldun, at the spot that had been indicated by himself while alive. For once when hunting on that mountain his attention had been caught by a solitary tree. He liked it, and remained sitting in its shade for some time in pleasant reverie. "This place is apt for my last resting place," he said to those about him; "let it be noted."

XV

THE LEGACY OF CHINGIS-KHAN

CHINGIS-KHAN worked in his own interests and in those of his family and his kin. He left to his descendants an immense empire and, contained in his *Institutions* (*Jasak*) and in his *Sayings* (*Bilik*), the guiding principles for its administration. The conquest of immense territories and of civilized nations did not change Chingis-Khan's constitutional views, and they remained what they had been when he had only succeeded in uniting under his rule "all the generations that lived in felt tents." To the end of his life he regarded his Empire as the property of his clan, where all things were arranged in such a way that his clansmen and his companions might extract the greatest amount of advantage for themselves and make their life enjoyable. He believed that his descendants and the Mongol aristocracy would eternally live this nomad life,

because a nomad life was easier and freer and because it was easier for nomads to rule over the sedentary population. The sedentary inhabitants of towns and villages were, in his view, the lifelong slaves of their nomad rulers, obliged to toil in order that the latter might live a freer and better life.

Chingis-Khan's views were in no way modified by his intercourse with men of civilized nations. The Mongol Empire was ruled by his family, which was the Golden family—*altan-uruk*—by his sons and nearest relatives, who together with all the Mongol aristocracy, with his companions and their descendants, with the guards and *tarkats* (freemen) now formed its ruling class—the class in whose interest it had been built and in whose interest alone it was to continue to exist. The idea of a collective domination of a clan was in no way opposed to the idea of the individual authority of the Kagan, for he was primarily the head of his own clan, raised to that high rank by the Sky and by all his clansmen. The Empire must be one, and at its head there must be one emperor. "Let my rank," said Chingis, "be inherited by one of my sons. My words are immutable; I shall not permit them to be infringed."

But as the Empire is the property of the whole

imperial family, Chingis recognized the old system of partitions, owing to which every member of the dynasty had the usufruct of his share of the common property. The nucleus of each of these part-kingdoms (*inju*) was formed by an *ulus* or group of nomad clans capable of producing a given contingent of warriors and provided with a sufficient amount of grazing ground (*nutuk*, *yurt*) to allow them to live in affluence. Besides this nucleus the sons, brothers, widows or other kinsmen of the Kagan could also be assigned apanages consisting of newly-conquered lands with a sedentary population. But a sedentary province did not become part of their *inju*; its revenues did not go to the prince who camped in its vicinity, but were shared between the Kagan and all the apanaged rulers, i.e. all the members of the dynasty. On the other hand, each of the apanaged persons received a certain number of skilled workmen, artisans, artists and so on, who were at his entire disposal and whom he might settle where he liked. The civilized provinces were governed by lieutenants (*darugachi*) responsible to the Kagan, the apanaged princes not being allowed to interfere in the financial or civil administration of the sedentary population. The Kagan, while remaining

head of the whole empire, had his own personal apanage (*inju*), with his *ulus* and *nutuk* (*yurt*) and his own settlements of workmen and artisans. Another personal possession of his was his body-guard.

The idea of the collective rulership of the imperial clan found another expression in the parliaments—*kurultai*—at which the Kagan was elected, and affairs common to the whole empire discussed. In this case, too, the ideas of Chingis-Khan had suffered no change. The *kurultai* remained what it had always been in his system—a congress of the Khan's clansmen and of the Mongol aristocracy, that owed obedience to the Kagan, as the head of the empire ruling by the "power of the Eternal Sky" (*möngke tengri-yin kuchundur*).

Chingis-Khan himself appointed his successor; His choice fell on his third son, Ugedei. It was a new proof of his habitual perspicacity and of his knowledge of men. Of the four sons of Chingis by his senior wife, Bortë—Juchi, Chagatai, Ugedei and Tului, not one inherited his father's genius, or his iron will, so indispensable in the ruler of an empire like the Mongol. But Ugedei was magnanimous and humane; he attracted people by his

gentle manners, and at the same time had sufficient firmness of will not to submit to irresponsible influences and intrigues, and to act severely when necessary. That was why Chingis settled his choice on him rather than on Tului, his favourite, a brave warrior and a gifted captain, or on Chagatai, a strict follower of all the Institutions of his father, well versed in the *Jasak*, to which Chingis attached such importance. When Chingis-Khan announced his decision to Ugedei, and asked him for his opinion, Ugedei answered: "Father! It is your pleasure to bid me speak; I may not say that I am not capable of being your successor; but I fear that my sons and grandsons will be men without worth and will not be able to succeed to the throne. That is all I have to say." "If all the sons and grandsons of Ugedei prove incapable," said Chingis, "can it be that of all my descendants there will not be found one who is worthy?"

In view of this utterance it is not to be wondered at that the opinion prevailed among the Mongol Princes and aristocracy that Chingis had willed it that his successors should be chosen from the line of Ugedei. In so many words Chingis does not seem to have said so; but there is no doubt that, anxious to see the empire he had created provided

with rulers in the future, "Chingis-Khan left an instruction that an heir should be chosen and confirmed beforehand from among the legitimate sons of that one who was worthy of the government, and to whom it could be entrusted."

The *kurultai* had no power to change the decision of the Kagan; so it could only accept Chingis' choice of an heir. When after Chingis-Khan's death the princes and other aristocrats met at a great assembly on the Kerulen, then, according to the *Secret History of the Mongols*, "in accordance with Chingis' testament they proclaimed Ugedei Kagan and announced his accession to the Ten Thousand of Chingis-Khan's Bodyguard and to all the peoples." Ugedei fully fulfilled the hopes of his father, who had singled him out with such knowledge, and during his reign the unity of the empire was preserved and the concerted rule of the imperial family with the Kagan at its head was troubled by nothing; it looked as if the plans and dreams of Chingis-Khan were going to materialize. Ugedei could even afford to allude to the welfare of the common people: "Our Kagan Chingis," he used to say, "built up our imperial house with great labour. Now it is time to give the peoples peace and prosperity, and to alleviate their burdens."

And indeed Chingis-Khan had built his "imperial house" because he had devoted "great labour" to the construction of an Empire which he conceived of as the patrimony of the imperial house, and which he wished to leave to his heirs in good order.

To the end of his days Chingis-Khan remained a partisan of Uigur culture and of Uigur education which he considered to be best adapted to the needs of his Mongols, showing in this great discernment. His preference for Uigur civilization was not impaired by his acquaintance with the higher civilizations of China and of Islam or by close contact with representatives of these civilizations, even when they were as remarkable as Yeliu-Ch'uts'ai or Ch'ang-Ch'un. Chingis-Khan thought that the time would soon come when the number of Mongols who had acquired an Uigur education would be so great that the empire would be able to do without the employment of foreigners in the civil administration. He regarded education—at any rate that education without which it was impossible to keep the empire together or to assure its authority over settled and civilized provinces—as quite compatible with a nomadic life. He hoped his successors would be able to organize a civil

administration similar to that which he had given his army and instilled with the spirit of the *Jasak*. He placed great hopes in the organized power of his people, or rather of its pastoral aristocracy.

Chingis-Khan's empire survived by some forty years the death of its great founder. His dynasty maintained itself in the part-kingdoms that grew out of the disintegration of the united empire for several generations more. The feudal princes that rule the Mongols to-day[1] are for the most part descendants of Chingis-Khan. The constitution of the Mongol Empire left numerous traces in those of the states that grew out of its disintegration, some of them surviving to this day. All this speaks for the organizing power of the great conqueror.

But, on the whole, the ambitious plans of Chingis-Khan met with failure. His empire dissolved, and the Mongols who had been led by the force of his military and political genius on to the theatre of world history did not maintain themselves long there. In the conquered lands they were absorbed by the more numerous or more civilized nations in whose midst they found themselves; at home

[1] Since the establishment of a Republic in Outer Mongolia, this is true to-day only of Inner, or Chinese, Mongolia.

they relapsed into the state out of which they had emerged under his leadership.

The weakest points in Chingis-Khan's political system were his plan to combine civilization with nomadic life and his confident hope that his family would not disintegrate, and would continue for ever to exercise their collective rulership headed by a Khan who reigned by the power of the Everlasting Sky, and obeying the rules of his *Jasak*, which was good for all times. Both prospects proved impossible. Civilization was incompatible with nomadism, while the *Jasak* was powerless to stop the numerous factors that worked against the survival of the ruling family's unity.

XVI

CHINGIS-KHAN IN HIS DAILY LIFE

CHINGIS-KHAN had four chief wives : Bortë, Kulan, Yesui and Yesugen, and, accordingly, four chief " tents " or headquarters (*ordu*). He had besides a great number of junior wives (one of them was the daughter of the Kin Emperor), concubines and servant girls. When at home he liked to be surrounded by good-looking women. Even in his campaigns he always had with him besides one (or more) of his wives, an orchestra " consisting of seventeen or eighteen beautiful damsels, very skilful at playing musical instruments," as we are informed by the Chinese general Meng-Hung. The same author gives the following account of a visit to Chingis-Khan : " When our ambassador was introduced into the Khan's presence, after the ceremony of reception was over, he was told to sit down to drink wine with the Khan's wife, the Princess Lai-Man and eight

concubines, whom they styled ladies; and who were all invariably present during and after every meal. Their complexion is of a dazzling whiteness and their appearance beautiful; four of them are Princesses of Kin, the other four had been the wives of Tatars. They are very beautiful and enjoy his excessive love."

In spite of this statement, it is unlikely that Chingis-Khan had an "excessive love" for his concubines or for any other women. The fact that he lived to an advanced age and preserved to the end a freshness of mind and body, taking part in hunts till shortly before his death, shows that he never indulged in sensual excesses. It is hard to say—for we lack conclusive evidence—whether Chingis-Khan ever really loved any woman. But a Mongol tradition will have it that he was passionately enamoured of the beautiful Kulan, of the clan Merkit. According to this tradition his attendant Naya was entrusted with bringing to Chingis the maiden Kulan. Fearing enemies, Naya kept Kulan in his tent for three days and only after that presented her to Chingis. When he heard of this, Chingis was enraged and said: "After examining him severely, put him to death." While Naya was being tortured Kulan said:

"Naya told us that he was the Khan's courtier and that he will also convey me [with the others]. As there were mutinous soldiers on the way, he kept us in his tent. If we had not met Naya and if he had not kept us with him, I do not know what would have become of us. Do not torture him; but rather, if such be your imperial mercy towards me, let my virginity be tested." Naya said: "I served my master in all sincerity and always regarded it as my duty to present to him the fair girls and good horses that were obtained in distant countries; if I ever had anything else in my mind, then may I die." Chingis said: "Kulan talks sense." The same day Kulan underwent an examination, which left him satisfied of her chastity. He only loved her all the more for this incident. As for Naya he set him free, saying: "This is a man without guile; he may be entrusted with great affairs."

Jealous of all he regarded as his property Chingis was naturally jealous of his wives and concubines. On one occasion as he was sitting and drinking wine in the company of two of his wives, Yesui and Yesugen, both of them of Tatar origin, he noticed that a sigh escaped Yesui. This at once raised his jealousy and his suspicion. And indeed, not far

from his tent, a young man was discovered who was found to belong to none of the tribes that owed allegiance to Chingis. On being asked by the Khan who he was, the young man answered : " I am the betrothed of Yesui ; when she was taken I fled. Now that her fate is settled I have come out of my hiding-place, hoping that in a large crowd of people I might pass unrecognized." Chingis knew him to be a Tatar and ordered him to be beheaded, saying : " You are the descendant of my enemies ; and you have come to spy on me ; I have killed all your kin, and I see no cause to hesitate in your case."

Nevertheless when it was necessary, Chingis was able to master his jealousy. When, for instance, his wife Bortë was captured by the Merkits, she was given for wife to the athlete Chilger. After recovering her, Chingis continued to treat her as affectionately and respectfully as before, and to regard her as his chief wife ; only the sons she bore him were given the rights and style of princes.

The supply of concubines for himself and his companions once assured, Chingis occasionally gave one of his wives or concubines to a particularly deserving general. Thus was his wife Ibagu, daughter of Ja-gan-bo and niece of the Wang-Khan,

given to Jurchidei. The occasion for this was a terrible dream Chingis had while he was sleeping with her, and Jurchidei was mounting the guard. He said to Ibagu, " It is not that I have ceased to like you for anything wrong in your character or for insufficient beauty, neither did I say that your body was unclean when I marked you for one of my wives. I give you to Jurchidei on account of his great services, for his having risked his life in battle and restored seceding tribes to my empire. Your father Ja-gan-bo gave as your dowry the cook Ashik-Temur and two hundred men ; now that you go away from me, leave me a hundred men and Ashik-Temur as a keepsake."

The favourite pleasure of Chingis-Khan was the chase. He was also fond of good horses, and of wine. In the latter case he shared the tastes of his people, but here as elsewhere he gave proof of his usual self-control and sense of measure. While he discouraged drunkenness in his army, he never went so far as to prohibit altogether the use of strong liquor : " If there is no way to keep a man from drinking," he said, " he may get drunk three times a month ; more than three times is a transgression ; twice is better than three times ; once is better still, and the best of all is never to drink.

But who can find a man who will never get drunk?"

On one occasion Chingis asked his friend and companion Bogurchi-Noyan, what did the latter regard as the highest pleasure of man. Bogurchi answered that it was to go out hunting in the spring riding a good horse and holding a good falcon in one's hand. Chingis asked the same question of Borugula and other generals, and their replies were more or less similar to Bogurchi's. "No," said Chingis-Khan, "a man's greatest pleasure is to defeat his enemies, to drive them before him, to take from them that which they possessed, to see those whom they cherished in tears, to ride their horses, to hold their wives and daughters in his arms."

These are characteristic words, and reveal much of Chingis' personality. He was not lured by the pleasures of bravery, by glory, or even by power; what he valued in victory was its fruits, the possession of new things acquired from the enemy after the thirst of vengeance had been satisfied. He was the ideal embodiment of the steppe warrior, dominated by the instinct of acquisition, and attached, above all, to material possession.

His colossal strength of will enabled him to control these instincts, and to make such use of them as to obtain the maximum results. Will-power, self-control, the ability to avoid one-sided impulses, were, as we have emphasized elsewhere, the main features of his character. He knew the time and place for every expression of feeling and demanded the same of his subordinates. Not in vain does the Mongol tradition ascribe to him these words: "In everyday life behave like two-year-old calves, but in battle be like hawks; at feasts and entertainments be like young colts, but in battle fly at the enemy like falcons; in broad daylight be alert like any old wolf and in the night's darkness cautious like the black raven." Chingis himself knew well how to wait and go on waiting.

While breaking each and all to his will the Mongol Emperor was capable of restraining his wrath, and subordinating it to the dictates of reason. Thus, for instance, it was his desire to put to death his uncle, Daaritai, for siding with the Wang-Khan against his own nephew. But Bogurchi said to him: "To destroy one's own kin is the same as to quench the fire of one's own hearth; you have nothing left to remind you of your father but this uncle of yours. Have you the heart to destroy him?"

Chingis was moved, agreed with his friend's view, and forgave his uncle.

In this connection Chingis-Khan's relations with the Moslem Cadi, Wahid-ud-din Bushenji, is characteristic. Chingis often conversed with him, questioning him about Islam. On one occasion the Emperor remarked to the Cadi that his name would become glorious throughout the world for his vengeance on the Khwarezmshah Muhammed, who was not a real king, but a bandit; he had killed Chingis-Khan's ambassadors, a thing no king would ever do. Soon after that he asked the Cadi whether his name would become glorious with posterity or not? Wahid-ud-din Bushenji hung his head, saying that he would answer the question if the Khan promised him his life. On being assured by Chingis-Khan of his safety, the Cadi went on to say that there will be no one to tell of the glorious name of the Mongol Emperor, because his servants kill each and all. When the Cadi had finished speaking, Chingis-Khan flung his bow and arrows which he was holding in his hand to the ground and turned away from his interlocutor in a state of intense emotion. At the sight of the wrath of the terrible conqueror, the Cadi thought he was done for, and that he would presently have to

depart this life. But a minute later the Khan turned his face to the Cadi and said to him, that up to the present he had regarded him as a man of reason, but after hearing those words it had become evident to him that the Cadi did not possess complete knowledge. There were many kings and kingdoms on the earth, but whichever gave shelter to the brigand Muhammed would suffer devastation. But strange nations and foreign kings would for ever preserve the name of Chingis-Khan.

We have plenty of trustworthy evidence of Chingis-Khan's ability to master his anger. On occasion he even found it expedient to leave infractions of discipline without too severe a punishment, though in general he enforced it with ruthless severity. Thus for instance during the campaign in the West when he sent the three *tumens* of Jebë, Subeedei and Taguchar to pursue the Khwarezm-shah, he gave strict instructions not to do any harm to the possessions of the Governor of Herat, Malik-Khan Amir-ul-mulk. Jebë and Subeedei observed the order, but Taguchar-Bagatur laid waste part of that territory. When he received the report, Chingis-Khan's first intention was to put Taguchar to death for disobedience, but on second thoughts

he only reprimanded him, and for only punishment released him from his command.

While establishing the most rigid discipline in his army and the strictest order in his Empire, Chingis-Khan was always liberal, generous and hospitable, fully answering in these respects to the ideal of an aristocratic warrior of the steppes. The accounts of his reception of Ch'ang-Ch'un, of the Sung Ambassador, of Moslems and of Uigurs, show that even with foreigners (especially if he considered them useful for his ends) he was capable of showing the same qualities.

We have become accustomed to represent Chingis-Khan as a cruel and treacherous tyrant who marked his progress by a track of blood over mountains of corpses of peaceful citizens slaughtered by his order, and over the ruins of cities whose prosperity he destroyed. It cannot be denied that our sources have much to tell of his bloody deeds, from the assassination of his half-brother Bekter to the wholesale massacres ordered in his later wars.

Reading them and confronting them with the other sides of his character one may begin to think of him as a complex and strangely ambiguous being, uniting the characters of a bloodthirsty tyrant and of an epic hero, of a savage destroyer

and of a constructive genius. But would such a view correspond to the reality ?

A careful and critical study of the sources must convince the unprejudiced student of to-day, that neither when he was yet but Temuchin, nor later in life when he became Khan of the Mongols, did Chingis-Khan display any inclination to wanton cruelty or any passion for destruction. But, however great his genius, he was a man of his age and of his nation, and for that reason he must be judged against the background of his times and milieu, rather than any attempt be made to transfer him into other ages or countries. Then it will easily be seen, that even in his greatest wars Chingis' cruelty or his bloodthirstiness never surpassed that which was displayed by contemporary soldiers of other nations. Like other great conquerors of all times and nations, Chingis-Khan was capable of destroying in cold blood his own and his enemy's soldiers; he was capable, if he considered it advantageous or useful for his ends, of massacring the civil population of a city, but he never recurred to wanton atrocities, and displayed no savage cruelty towards his prisoners for mere lust of vengeance. Some of his contemporaries, who belonged to more civilized nations than his, were

capable of causing their prisoners to be tortured to death in their presence (as did Jelal-ud-din after the battle of Perwan) and were even praised for such barbarous actions. Chingis-Khan would never have thought of erecting a tower of 2,000 live men who were placed one on the other and then covered with brick and mortar, as was done by Tamerlane, another Asiatic conqueror, whose outlook was undoubtedly far wider than Chingis-Khan's.

The self-controlled, disciplined and eminently practical nomad Chingis remained to the end of his days, was prevented from becoming a bloodthirsty murderer by simple calculation. He realized too well the profits the settled and civilized people would bring to their nomad masters ever to wish the wanton destruction of civilized towns and villages. This did not prevent him on occasion from destroying a city, if such a measure was dictated by the necessities of war or policy.

Neither do we know of any fact in the private life of Chingis that could be interpreted as evidence of his peculiar cruelty. On the contrary, all our sources give numerous instances of his magnanimity and of that self-control on which we have already insisted. The assassination of Bekter and other

murders and massacres done at the order of Chingis, cannot be taken as evidence of his cruelty or bloodthirstiness, if one considers the ideas and manners of the time. The crimes Chingis-Khan committed, or was prepared to commit, will find attenuating circumstances in the moral standards of his milieu, and in the ethical and religious ideas that fed his mind ; he was and remained a primitive Shamanist nomad, with a rudimentary sense of moral responsibility to the Everlasting Sky and the guardian spirits, and with a fully-developed instinct of acquisition.

At war, he often recurred to ruse, and even to treachery, but in private life he never displayed these traits. In others, as we have already shown, he valued straightforwardness above all things. On the other hand, he was avaricious to the point of suspiciousness and jealously attached to his possessions.

A mighty conqueror, who had fought many campaigns and commanded in so many battles and sieges, Chingis-Khan does not seem to have been conspicuous for personal courage ; the captain in him eclipsed the soldier. At any rate he had no inclination for romantic bravery, nor was there anything in him of the adventurer. If in his youth

he had occasion to show his personal courage, after he became Khan he was always placed in such conditions as made any conspicuous display of bravery out of place. He conducted the operations of his army and commanded in pitched battles, but did not join in the melée in the ranks of his cavalry, well understanding that that was not the business of a commander-in-chief.

On one occasion Bala-Noyan, one of his companions, asked him: "You are called lord of power, and hero. What traces are there on your hand of conquest and victory?" Chingis-Khan answered him: "Before I ascended the throne of Empire, I was once riding down a road. Six men, lying in ambush at the passage of a bridge, attempted my life. When I drew near to them I unsheathed my sword and attacked them. They met me with a cloud of arrows, but all the arrows missed their mark and not one touched me. I delivered them to death with my sword and passed on unhurt. On my way back I passed the place where I had slain those men; their six horses were roaming riderless. I drove all those horses to my home."

This, according to Chingis-Khan, was the "sign of conquest." The Sky having decreed that he

would not meet a chance death, he had killed all his enemies and taken their horses. He always regarded himself in that light. The Everlasting Blue Sky had given to him and to his golden Clan Mongol, the domination over all " the generations that lived in felt tents," over all their neighbours, over the whole world. It was consequently his duty to provide for his followers in such a way that by leading them to certain victory they might enjoy the bliss of conquerors. His military organization and his *Jasak* were equally well adapted to control a small tribe and to rule the world, and the man who would obey his institutions in times to come, would be entitled to say of himself as Chingis had said : " The Sky has ordered me to rule all nations." Such was the philosophy of the " savage of genius."

It is said that Chingis-Khan was tall, of strong build, and had " the eyes of a cat."

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